
Who am I and where do I belong?

Cultural Identity Conflict, Negotiation and Intercultural Competence among Chinese International Students

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For all my dearest friends

who remind me where I start from and help me discover where I can head to

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Abstract

In order to improve international student enrolment, universities have to tackle challenges of ensuring satisfying experience of enrolled international students that is perceived to greatly impact future recruitment. Accordingly, this research aims to provide valuable insights into Chinese international students' cultural identity conflict that hinders their obtainment of a positive overseas experience. An online survey assessing a range of predictors of cultural identity conflict involving personality traits, ethnic and host cultural identity strength, intergroup factors and strategies of negotiating ethnic and host cultures, and how identity conflict and various identity negotiation strategies influence intercultural competence, was distributed to the entire pool of Chinese students enrolled in a New Zealand university and an Australia university. A total of 255 students completed the survey. Multiple regression analysis revealed that conscientiousness, secure attachment, commitment to ethnic identity, low perceived discrimination, easy access to academic activities with host students significantly protected Chinese students from experiencing cultural identity conflict, whereas preoccupied and fearful attachment, assimilation strategy increased the risk of identity conflict. Additionally, Alternation between cultural demands as one of variations of integration strategy was surprisingly found to exacerbate identity conflict and led to lower levels of intercultural sensitivity, while the other variation, blending strategy significantly resulted in greater intercultural sensitivity. Managerial implications for educational institutions were discussed based on these results. To advance this field of study, limitations of the current research and future research avenues were also presented.

Chapter 1 Introduction

“We all ask: how can peoples of different cultural backgrounds encounter each other, seek avenues of mutual understanding, negotiate and compromise on their initial positions, and achieve some degree of harmonious engagement?”

John W. Berry 2010

1.1 Background of the Research

A continuing growth in demand for higher education (HE) around the world is inevitably related to impacts of globalisation (Van Damme, 2001; Woodfield, 2010). In the current increasingly interconnected world, being capable of interacting and functioning in this international environment is considered as a key competence of graduates by the labour market (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2012). Overseas education, not surprisingly, is viewed as an effective pathway to develop such intercultural skills. Driven by such motive and need, the number of university students enrolled outside their home countries has risen rapidly, from 0.8 million in 1975 to 4.5 million in 2012 worldwide (OECD, 2013). This demand is expected to continue to grow to 7.2 million by 2025 (Böhm, Davis, Meares & Pearce, 2002).

Accompanied by the growing size of the international education demand is the increasing emphasis of international dimensions, namely internationalisation, in the higher education sector worldwide. Internationalisation is often defined as “the process of integrating an international perspective in the teaching/learning, research and service functions of higher education institutions” (Knight, 2001, p. 229). According to the global survey on internationalisation of higher education conducted by Maringe and Foskett (2009, cited in Maringe, 2010), internationalisation had been placed as a strategic focus and developed through a variety of activities and programmes in all 200 surveyed universities across main regions in the world.

Although strategic priorities for internationalisation might vary across different universities in different regions, increasing international student enrolment is commonly a major focus of most universities (Andrade, 2006; Maringe 2010; Schneider, 2000). Especially for Western universities whose education quality leads in the world, opportunity to obtain premium international student fees is viewed as a primary driver and expected benefit of involvement in internationalisation (Lee & Wesche, 2000; Woodfield, 2010; Taylor, 2010). In addition to the instant economic value, attracting more international students helps build

institutions' international brand and reputation in the long run, which are important factors affecting student decision-making (Taylor, 2010). Due to these benefits, competition among nations and institutions to recruit international students has become very intense over the past few decades.

However, while universities expand the scope of international student recruitment and benefit from international students, almost all of them are challenged to provide satisfying experiences for enrolled international students (Lee, 2010; Perrucci & Hu, 1995). Such challenges might be largely attributed to cultural diversity, and resultant stresses and difficulties in international students' learning and socialising on a relatively culturally homogenous campus (Andrade, 2006). This shows the significance for institutions and host societies to develop a better understanding of international students' acculturation issues (i.e., issues that occur as a result of interaction with a different culture and society, cited in Gibson, 2001), in order to ensure students' satisfaction with their overall experiences.

Despite the considerable number of studies on acculturation, it is argued that although the situation is improving, limited attention has been paid to the importance of cultural identity and its relationship with acculturation and adaptation (Leong & Ward, 2000; Schwartz, Montgomery & Briones, 2006). Cross (1995) concluded that in cross-cultural transition, as acculturating persons were exposed to new beliefs, values, ways of thinking and behaving, their original value systems and behaviours might be under great challenges and pressure. Potentially, acculturating individuals are confronted with incompatible demands between heritage cultures and host cultures, forcing them to make a choice as to which culture they are affiliated towards (Berry, 1980; Phinney, 1990; Ward, Stuart & Kus, 2011). This situation is conceptualised by Baumeister, Shapiro and Tice (1985) as "identity conflict" and might trigger a subjective feeling of "being torn" (p. 416). Researchers have emphasised the important role of cultural identity management in effective intercultural encounters (Collier, 1989; Kim, 2009). Therefore, we can see a close link between cultural identity and acculturation and if not handled well, cultural identity conflict might exert a negative impact on students' adaptive results.

It is possible for individuals to shape and reconstruct their values and behaviours through the interplay with another culture, changing the extent of identification with country of origin and contact, so as to alleviate such conflict (Schwartz, Montgomery & Briones, 2006). Much research has touched on identity negotiation strategies and concluded that retaining ethnic identity and seeking host cultural identity (referred as "integration" or "biculturalism") is the most adaptive strategy, compared with identification with one culture

or none (e.g., Berry & Sam, 1997; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013; Ward & Kennedy, 1994). However, as far as the researcher knows, few studies have investigated which style of negotiating ethnic and host cultural identities minimise or increase identity conflict. Does holding only one cultural identity means less conflict? Is internalisation of two cultures related to more or less conflict? If more, how can we explain that integration has been found as the “most adaptive strategy”? To answer these questions, biculturalism scholars argued that there might be different processes of achieving integration within people that may involve different extent of conflicting feelings (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2007). Yet, variations in integration and their effects on cross-cultural adaptation is a research gap which has not been widely addressed by empirical evidence (Ward, 2008; 2013).

Education services are typically characterised as many interpersonal contacts. When international students are exposed to extensive cross-cultural encounters in an unfamiliar host country, their cultural identities would function as a guidance they can draw on to recognise who they are, where they stand and should go towards, and how they should react (Adams & Marshall, 1996). Thus, in light of the information mentioned above, it can be posited that fuller and better knowledge of international students’ cultural identity and varied strategies of negotiating identity conflict is of great importance for institutions and host countries to understand the quality of students’ intercultural experiences.

Accordingly, this thesis intends to provide valuable insights in terms of potential cultural identity conflict experienced by international students and their responses to such conflict through conducting an exploratory quantitative survey. This is done by firstly broadening the scope of crucial predictors of cultural identity conflict; predictors that have been highlighted in theoretical literature or strongly supported in empirical findings are included in this study. Second, as limited conclusions have been drawn in terms of the relationships between different ways of negotiating cultural identities (esp., dynamics of integration strategy) and identity conflict, one major objective of the present study is to advance the understanding of this topic. To achieve so, this research takes a quantitative approach to capture different monocultural strategies and sub-categories of integration strategy and then compare their effects on identity conflict and intercultural abilities. The reason to conduct a quantitative survey is to obtain as much data as possible so that a big picture of international students’ cultural identity problems can be generated.

1.2 Research Context

This research investigates cultural identity conflict and negotiation strategies among Chinese international students in New Zealand and Australia.

According to the OECD report (2013), the number of foreign students enrolled in Oceania has tripled since 2000, suggesting the rising popularity of education organisations in this region. In 2012, 6% of all international students were enrolled at the tertiary level in Australia, making it the fifth preferred studying destination for the year, following the United States (16%), the United Kingdoms (13%), Germany (6%) and France (6%) (OECD, 2014). Although New Zealand was not ranked within the top five destinations, it emerged as a competitive new player in the international education market, with its share of foreign students enrolled in tertiary institutions increasing by more than 1%, reaching 2% in 2012 (OECD, 2014). In terms of international student density, in 2012, Australia has the highest percentage of international students enrolled in the tertiary sector, followed by the United Kingdom, Switzerland, New Zealand and Austria. Specifically, in 2012, international students accounted for 18% and 16% of total enrolment in Australian and New Zealand tertiary institutions (OECD, 2014).

Such large proportion of foreign students have created substantial economic benefits for Australia and New Zealand, including a significant amount of tuition fees that are much higher than domestic fees (OECD, 2014) and other living expenditure. Statistics of 2014 have shown that the total spending by onshore international students (referred as “education-related personal travel” by Australia Bureau of Statistics and Statistics NZ) made up the largest proportion (28%) of Australian service export (Australia Department of Education and Training, 2015a) and 14.5% of New Zealand service export (Statistics NZ, 2015). In light of the information, the great and still increasing international student enrolment makes a significant contribution to Australian and New Zealand’s overall economy, which has been a main drive to maintain and enhance their shares on the international education market.

Of all foreign students enrolled in higher education institutions in two countries, Chinese students represented the largest group, accounting for 26.5% of total international tertiary students in 2014 in New Zealand (Education NZ, 2014a) and 36.1% till 2014 in Australia (Australia Department of Education and Training, 2015b). This data indicates the great importance of Chinese market to New Zealand and Australian tertiary organisations. Despite the fact that China has been the predominant source of New Zealand international students, the number of Chinese university students studying in New Zealand has experienced a

dramatic fall (by 55.6%) between 2006 and 2010, dropping from 13202 students in 2006 to 5864 students in 2010. This negative growth has been mitigated since 2011; from 2011 to 2013, the number of Chinese students enrolled in New Zealand universities has steadily increased to 8366 (Education NZ, 2014a). However, New Zealand higher education institutions may again face big challenges of improving enrolment from China, as in general, the growth of demand for overseas education has recently slowed down in China (Education NZ, 2014b). This slow growth is mainly ascribed to students and parents' more rational decision making of studying abroad and the increasing opportunities of obtaining a foreign qualification through onshore programmes (Education NZ, 2014b). It suggests, in order to sustain and boost New Zealand and Australia's market share within Chinese higher education students, a better understanding of this market based on subjective feedback is urgent.

Practitioners and researchers believed that a satisfactory experience of current international students influences the willingness of spreading positive word-of-mouth of their institutions to prospective applicants, thereby affecting future enrolment (Lee, 2010; Times Higher Education, 2014). In order to track international students' satisfaction of their experiences, governments of Australia and New Zealand have conducted national surveys to examine students' satisfaction levels within areas such as learning, living, services and facilities, support and help. While the Australian report (Australia Department of Education and Training, 2014) focuses on the general profile of international students in different sections of higher education, the New Zealand research (NZ Ministry of Education, 2008) provides in-depth insights as to major markets. As demonstrated by NZ Ministry of Education's findings (2008), Chinese students felt the least culturally included in classes and campus and were significantly less satisfied with life in New Zealand than students from other Asian countries. Particularly, Chinese students tended to have fewer local friends than students from other parts of Asia South and North America.

This is in line with previous studies on international student adjustment that have shown that compared with foreign students from Europe, America or other English-speaking Asian countries, Chinese international students may be faced with intensified difficulties of adapting to Western societies, as cultural difference and language barrier between China and Western countries is relatively great (Heggins & Jackson, 2003; Lee, 2010; Yan & Berliner, 2011). Thus, the challenge of negotiating ethnic sense of self and possibly conflicting demands from the larger society may be especially salient for Chinese international students in Western host countries. This alerts institutions to pay more attention to specific needs and conflicting feelings of Chinese international students during their cross-cultural transition.

1.3 Thesis Structure

In order to effectively explain and discuss Chinese international students' cultural identity issues, this thesis comprises six chapters. The outline of each chapter is presented in Figure 1. This chapter provides a background to the research and specific research contexts, and also outlines the thesis structure. Chapter 2 provides a literature review on relevant constructs for the current research, identifies the research gaps and presents hypotheses, research questions and proposed research model. Following that, Chapter 3 outlines the methods adopted to examine the hypotheses and research questions, providing details on the sampling, procedure, instruments and the statistical analyses employed. Chapter 4 presents the statistical results. The meanings of the results are further discussed in Chapter 5. Institutional implications, limitations of this study and suggestions for future research are presented in Chapter 6.

Figure 1 – Thesis outline

Chapter 1: Introduction (Background of the research; Research context; Thesis structure)
Chapter 2: Literature Review (Internationalisation of higher education and international student experiences; Concepts of identity and cultural identity; Cultural identity conflict and predictors; Cultural identity negotiation strategy; Intercultural Competence; Proposed research model))
Chapter 3: Methodology (Aims and objectives; Overview of research method; Sampling; Procedure; Measures; Data analysis)
Chapter 4: Results (Data cleaning; Sample structure; Scale reliability; Assumption testing; Results of analyses; Comparison between New Zealand and Australia)
Chapter 5: Discussion (Summary of the findings; Protectors and risks of cultural identity conflict; Predominant cultural identity negotiation strategies; Effects of Cultural Identity Conflict and Negotiation on Intercultural Sensitivity)
Chapter 6: Conclusions (Managerial implication; Limitations of the research; Future research avenues)

Chapter 2 Literature Review

This chapter provides a theoretical foundation of important topics identified to be relevant to the current research. These theories will support the formulation of research hypotheses and questions. In order to investigate into cultural identity conflict and negotiation in Chinese international students, this chapter will first introduce a thorough and deep background of international students' experiences in tertiary institutions. Following that, definitions and important concepts of identity and cultural identity will be presented. An overview of cultural identity conflict concepts is also provided along with important antecedents and correlates identified in past theoretical models and empirical studies. Furthermore, this chapter will critique various identity negotiation strategies between heritage and host culture based on the extant acculturation literature. Last, intercultural competence as a measure of migrants' adaptive outcome will be discussed.

2.1 Internationalisation of HE and International Student Experience

2.1.1 *Importance of International Student Experience*

Given the financial, intellectual and cultural benefits international students can bring to the institutions in the host country, most colleges and universities across the world are committing to recruitment-related internationalisation strategies to attract more international students (Verbik & Lasanowski, 2007). However, most of them are faced with the challenge of ensuring a positive education experience for enrolled international students (Lee, 2010). This topic has been paid increasing attention because satisfaction with experiences is argued to considerably influence retention of current international students (e.g., Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994; Thompson & Thompson, 1996) as well as the sustainable growth of future international enrolment (e.g., Lee, 2008; 2010). Specifically, previous studies suggest although academic experience is the core experience institutions provide for students and relates to retention, social experience is as important in predicting retention rate (Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994). For international students, experience with social adjustment may greatly impact their satisfaction and retention, because integration into an unfamiliar social environment and formation of a social support network in a distant country may be very crucial for them to build a sense of feeling grounded. Moreover, Lee (2010) discovered that international students' perceived experiences relate to recommending their institutions to their home peers; experiencing difficulty in financing and social adjustment, and feeling treated unequally and unfairly were negatively associated with willingness to spread positive

word-of-mouth and to recommend their universities to compatriots. This suggests international students' important "agency" role in impacting future enrolment trend.

It is suggested that universities can best attract and retain students by identifying and meeting students' needs in terms of their experiences (Schertzer & Schertzer, 2004). International student experience has often been discussed within a problem framework (Perrucci & Hu, 1995). Therefore, in order to ensure a positive experience for international students and in return benefit future enrolment, it is helpful for institutions to first have a deep understanding of the difficulties that prevent international students from developing satisfying experiences.

2.1.2 Difficulties of International Student Experiences

Although both domestic students and international students encounter transition difficulties in the university life, scholars found that international students had more difficulty transiting and felt less satisfied with their experiences compared with domestic students (e.g., Andrade, 2006; Lee, 2010; Zhao, Kuh & Carini, 2005). That may be because international students deal with dual stress stemming from both making transition from a high school to a university system and adjusting to a new country and culture. In line with that, Andrade's (2006) review showed that such stress was related to two major categories, academic adjustment and social adjustment problems. Furthermore, Lee (2010) contended the primary source of international students' adjustment difficulties were related to their culture of origin (language and cultural issues). This source might be more salient for students from Eastern countries who study in Western countries because they need to negotiate great cultural and linguistic differences. For example, according to the National Survey of International Student in New Zealand (NZ Ministry of Education, 2008), Chinese international students felt the least culturally included in educational environment, followed by Korean students, compared with students from other Asian (e.g., India) and European (e.g., Germany) countries, America and Pacific islands, despite the prevalence of Chinese students studying in New Zealand. This suggests that Chinese students' might feel struggled with New Zealand class atmosphere because of language barriers and not feel their cultural values "fitting in" it.

Another adjusting area international students especially perceive difficult is social integration. Thompson and Thompson (1996) found that international students in two US universities ranked developing a social network as the most critical and difficult part in their overseas life. Lee (2010) argued that Asian students may particularly found it challenging to fit in with campus life and communicate effectively with host nationals due to cultural and language differences. In line with that, a case study with Asian international students in a US

university discovered that they encountered language barriers and different cultural values, which led to a lack of confidence in their communication skills and hindered them from forming friendship with Americans (Heggins & Jackson, 2003). Despite such social difficulties, 61% of survey international students in New Zealand in 2007 expressed they expected and desired more local friends (NZ Ministry of Education, 2008), suggesting their aspiration to integrate and involve in the host country.

In light of the information, this study is going to create a deeper understanding in how cultural differences, the primary source of adjustment difficulties for Asian international students in western institutions, influence their cross-cultural adjustment experiences. Specifically, it will focus on the intrapersonal issues associated with cultural identity in cross-cultural transition. The following sections will further discuss the importance of a better understanding of international students' cultural identity challenges and the ways they deal with them.

2.2 Conceptualisation of Identity and Cultural Identity

Before advancing the discussion as to the conflict between two committed cultural identities experienced by international student group and how they cope with it, this section will first articulate and elaborate the fundamental concepts of identity especially cultural aspects of identity, and their significant functions in intercultural socialisation.

2.2.1 *Definitions and conceptualisations of identity*

Undoubtedly, the question of “who I am” has been asked by almost every human being in different life stages and plays a crucial role in forming one's identity (Schwartz, 2001). However, there are still ongoing controversies in social science research with regard to what exactly identity is, how it is developed and how it functions (Baumeister, 2011; Schwartz, 2001). To answer those questions, a number of classic theorists in the field of identity theory tend to believe that identity is formed and developed at the interface between the individual and the social contexts (Adams & Marshall, 1996; Baumeister, 2011; Erikson, 1968; Schwartz, 2009; Schwartz, Montgomery & Briones, 2006). To support that, Baumeister (2011) argued that a complete solitary human would barely need or have much sense of identity as many self-related concerns (e.g., social roles, reputation, public self-consciousness, self-presentation and moral responsibility) would not occur without interacting with others. Furthermore, Erikson (1968) stated that identity is a process to build a coherent and dynamic internal organisation of self-understandings in order to define one's place in the social system.

This statement underpins that an understanding of oneself largely drives from participation in the social environment.

The concept of identity, based on the level of embeddedness of self within the contexts, is commonly categorised into two broad dimensions, from the most private to the most contextually oriented, including personal identity and collective (social) identity (Adams & Marshall, 1996; Erikson, 1968). Personal identity is often defined as goals, values and beliefs that one adopts and presents to differentiate him or her from others within certain social contexts (Adams & Marshall, 1996; Erikson, 1968). On the other hand, social or collective identity entails the ideals, values and practices of groups one endorses and has integrated into one's self-identification, as well as attitudes and behaviours towards "ingroups" (i.e., groups to which one identifies with and feel attached to) and "outgroups" (groups from which one distances himself) (Erikson, 1968; Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Although cultural identity, an aspect of social identity is central to the current research, Schwartz, Montgomery and Briones (2006) posited that personal and social identity can be inextricably interwoven. Such cases would happen especially when the values of the social group to which one belongs to correspond to the personal values one holds. In that way, confusion or crisis about social identity may also trigger doubts or crisis on one's personal identity (Schwartz, Montgomery & Briones, 2006). This can be very relevant to acculturating individuals who have high extent of identification and affiliation towards their heritage cultures. While their cultural values and beliefs are challenged by new cultural ideals of the host culture, their personal values and beliefs might be under pressure as well.

2.2.2 Definition and Components of Cultural Identity

Cultural identity is often regarded as a special case of social identity (Padilla & Perez, 2003) and is conceptualised as a result of the interactions between the personal and the cultural context (Bhatia & Ram, 2001, Schwartz, Montgomery & Briones, 2006). For migrants, it is a broad concept that can refer to identifications with either heritage/ethnic culture or the broader host national culture. For terminological clarity and consistency, this research refers to Chinese international students' affiliation with Chinese culture as their "ethnic identity" and their attachment to host culture as "host cultural identity". In line with the definition of social identity based on social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), but emphasising the cultural component, cultural identity can be defined as "the part of one's self-concept which drives from his knowledge of his membership of a cultural group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel, 1981, p.255). As this definition suggests, the meaning of cultural identity is multifaceted, including three

dimensions – an acknowledgement and knowledge of group membership, ingroup attitudes and emotional attachment towards the group (Cameron, 2004). Building on Tajfel's (1981) concept, Ashmore, Deaux and McLaughlin-Volpe (2004) expanded the dimensions and provided a much broader framework (details see Table 1).

In addition to the theoretical propositions of multidimensionality of social and cultural identity mentioned above, there has been empirical evidence (e.g., Cameron, 2004; Phinney 1992; Phinney & Ong, 2007; Umaña-Taylor, Yazedjian & Bámaca-Gómez, 2004; Yip & Fuligni, 2002) of existence of such multiple aspects. These empirical results were mainly produced by conducting a factor analysis on the measures of social/cultural identity, indicating the distinction between different factors. A comparison of identified components in a few representative theoretical and empirical studies is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 – Comparison of cultural/ethnic components in theoretical and empirical research

Author (s)		Components	Definitions
Theoretical Framework	Ashmore, Deaux & McLaughlin-Volpe (2004)	• Self-categorisation	Categorise oneself as a member of a particular cultural group
		• Evaluation	Positive or negative attitudes towards one's cultural group
		• Importance	The degree of significance of a particular group membership to one's overall self-concept
		• Attachment and sense of interdependence	The emotional involvement felt with a group
		• Social embeddedness	The degree to which a particular cultural identity is embedded in one's everyday ongoing social relationships
		• Behavioural involvement	The degree to which the person engages in actions that directly implicate the cultural identity category
		• Content and meaning	Self-attributed characteristics; political ideology; developmental narratives
Empirical Study	Phinney & Ong (2007)	• Exploration	Efforts to learn more about one's group and participation in ethnic cultural practices
		• Commitment	A strong attachment and a personal investment in a group
	Cameron (2004)	• Centrality	The amount of time spent thinking about being a group member
		• Affect	The positivity of feelings associated with the group membership
		• Ties	Perceptions of similarity, bond, and belongingness with other group members
	Umaña-Taylor, Yazedjian & Bámaca-Gómez, (2004)	• Exploration	The degree to which individuals have explored their ethnicity
		• Resolution	The degree to which individuals feel that they have resolved issues regarding their ethnicity
	Yip & Fuligni (2002)	• Affirmation	The degree of positive feelings towards one's ethnic group
	Yip & Fuligni (2002)	• Salience	The degree to which individuals feel closely identified to their ethnic background in some contexts
		• Behaviour	Engagement in behaviours that have unique symbolic meaning for a particular ethnic group based on the cultural values and beliefs of that group
	Phinney (1992);		
		• Ethnic behaviours and practices	Involvement in ethnic practices (e.g., language, food and association with other group members)
		• Affirmation and Belonging	A feeling of belonging to an ethnic group and attitudes toward the group
		• Achievement	The secure sense of self that is the optimal outcome of the identity formation process involving an exploration of the meaning of one's ethnicity

Although the numbers of the dimensions and their specific terminologies differ to some extent across studies, it is not hard to point out some parallels and connections between these typologies. First, according to social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and Ashmore, Deaux and McLaughlin-Volpe's (2004) structure, self-categorisation is the starting point of measuring one's cultural or ethnic identity because measurement of other dimensions (e.g., attachment and ingroup attitudes) must be based on verification of the fact that one is self-identified as a member of a particular group. This can often be captured by asking participants' cultural identification or ethnicities in open-ended questions or closed choices (Ashmore, Deaux & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004; Phinney & Ong, 2007). Second, commitment, attachment, affirmation, and belonging share a similar meaning that touches on a member's positive feelings and emotional investment, which is included in almost all the reviewed typologies, showing its importance. However, it is argued that a high level of affective association does not necessarily result in an achieved cultural identity (Phinney & Ong, 2007). This is because a full acceptance and internalisation of an identity requires a cognitive and behavioural process of exploring ideals or practices of one's cultural identification (Phinney, 1989), indicating the essential role of "exploration" element (Phinney & Ong, 2007; Umaña-Taylor, Yazedjian & Bámaca-Gómez, 2004) in identity forming. Third, the degree of importance one attributes to his or her cultural identity is examined in more than one study, labelled as "importance" (Ashmore, Deaux & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004), "centrality" (Cameron, 2004) and "salience" (Yip & Fuligni, 2002). Yip and Fuligni's (2002) study reported that people attaching higher significance to their ethnic identity have a stronger ethnic identity and tend to have positive daily well-being. Therefore, this construct is also a key component for measuring strength of cultural identity. Fourth, ethnic behaviours have also been involved in many framework of cultural identity (Ashmore, Deaux & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004; Phinney, 1992; Yip & Fuligni, 2002). However, Phinney and Ong (2007) contended that cultural identity is an internalised structure and can exist without involvement in cultural practices on a daily basis. Therefore, it would be better not to include cultural behaviours into measurement of level of ethnic identity for the sake of conceptual clarity.

Hence, based on the core components identified from the comparison of different framework, the current research will examine four elements of ethnic identity (identification with the heritage country) – self-categorisation, exploration, commitment and centrality. Paralleling to the measurement of ethnic identity, host cultural identity (identification with the host country) will also be measured by exploration and commitment. The exclusion of

self-categorisation and centrality is because these two constructs are more associated to the ethnic aspect of cultural identity of targeted participants (i.e., Chinese international students).

2.2.3 Cultural Identity Change in Acculturation

It has been long recognised that intercultural interactions might bring about significant issues to immigrants and sojourners (defined as “individuals who travel voluntarily to a new culture, usually for specific objectives such as educational and occupational opportunities, who view their residence in the new culture as fixed and finite, and who usually have expectations of returning to their country of origin”, in Ward & Kennedy, 1994) in the process of acculturation. Acculturation is defined as a broad construct referring to “a wide range of behaviours, attitudes, and values that change with contact between cultures” (Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind & Vedder, 2001, p. 495). Such changes might lead to changes in acculturating people’s cultural identities (Schwartz, Montgomery & Briones, 2006). Bosma and Kunnen (2001) explained that the occurrence of identity change is triggered by a mismatch between knowledge of oneself and the social environment. From this perspective, Changes in cultural identity might occur when acculturating individuals’ knowledge of oneself which is considered as their existing cultural orientation (ethnic identity) and relevant commitments do not match up with current social standards and expectations of the host society.

Social identity research can help further understand the motivations behind cultural identity change and processes of reshaping cultural identity in the acculturation process. According to social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), group identification is closely linked with self-concept. Baumeister (2011) contended that individuals fundamentally and inherently strive to be accepted socially, namely, positively included in a social group, thus forming a positive social identity. This contributes to a positive self-concept because most of emotions associated with belonging and acceptance are positive (Baumeister, 2011; Phinney, 1990). Furthermore, the positive self-concept can be boosted through comparisons between ingroups and relevant outgroups in a way that ingroups are evaluated favourably (Phinney et al., 2001; Stets & Burke, 2000). In other words, whether a particular social identity relates with a positive self-concept depends on if the ingroup is socially valued or not. In this way, as new comers to a new host culture might experience negative intergroup comparison (e.g., discrimination), they may feel inferior to members of the receiving culture and they are possibly faced with a negative social identity and hold their ethnic identity in low self-esteem (i.e., the evaluations of the worthiness or value of the social group, cited in Crocker & Major, 1989). If such identity challenges come about, people are

motivated to improve their status and this can be done in two main manners - (1) strengthening their ethnic identity to buffer acculturative stress (Mossakowski, 2003) and (2) revising their ethnic identity and incorporating new elements from the new culture in order to be more socially appropriate (Padilla & Perez, 2003).

Furthermore, it should also be noted that the relationship between acculturation and cultural identity change is reciprocal; acculturation triggers identity change and development while cultural identity functioning as an internally self-regulatory system guides individuals' cognition, emotions and behaviours in cross-cultural transition (Adams & Marshall, 1996). Ward and Kennedy's (1994) empirical research showed that sojourners with strong ethnic identification experienced better sociocultural adjustment whereas those with strong host cultural identification experienced better psychological adjustment. This suggests, forming and maintaining a coherent and positive cultural identity is crucial to resolve possible adjustment difficulties.

2.3 Cultural Identity Conflict and Predictors

2.3.1 *Definitions and conceptualisation*

As discussed in the previous section, drawn from social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), while migrants acculturate and interact with the society of settlement, how they perceive themselves and their original cultural identities are challenged and might change in order to maintain or improve their social status. One of the workable ways to respond to such identity challenges is to integrate cultural ideals from their host societies to form a dual-identity composed of influences and commitments from both home cultures and host cultures (i.e., bicultural identity) (Tommey, Dorjee & Ting-Toomey, 2013). The benefits and motivations behind internalising values of two cultures, argued by Schwartz, Montgomery and Briones (2006) is that one can reduce the risks of being criticised as being disloyal from co-nationals and being excluded from host-nationals. Benet-Martínez and Haritatos (2005) also suggested that holding two cultural orientations can be related to feelings of uniqueness and a strong sense of belonging as well as traditions. Moreover, a recent qualitative research using in-depth interviews with Vietnamese international students at an Australian university indicated that students integrated new aspects of Australian cultural identity into their identities so that they can achieve utilitarian goals such as better academic performance (Pham & Saltmarsh, 2013).

However, besides the benefits, it is also pointed out that potential identity-related issues might be resulted from engagement in more than one culture (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos,

2005). A possible issue, according to Baumeister, Shapiro and Tice (1985), is “identity conflict” which is described as “the problem of the multiply defined self whose definitions have become incompatible” (p.408). The authors noted that identity conflict, particularly, can arise in the scenario of acculturation; when a person possesses affective commitments to at least two cultural groups that make competing prescriptions for behaviours, he or she is very likely to experience “identity conflict” between multiple cultural identities. To put it clear, to experience cultural identity conflict, two preconditions need to fulfill: (1) one attains an emotional attachment to multiple cultures and (2) behavioural demands from these cultures are contradictory for individuals to conform to (Baumeister, Shapiro & Tice, 1985). Based on this claim, it should be noted and clarified that biculturals who “have internalised more than one culture” (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005, p. 1016) and feel attached to two cultures do not necessarily experience identity conflict unless the attachments are related to irreconcilable values, expectations and demands (Ward, Stuart & Kus, 2011). Baumeister, Shapiro and Tice’s (1985) model of identity conflict is adopted because it might be very pertinent to Chinese international students’ intercultural experience in Australia and New Zealand. This is because Asian students often have aspirations to understand western cultures better through an overseas education (Lee & Morrish, 2012), and the differences between Chinese culture and New Zealand or Australian cultures are relatively considerable in various cultural dimensions, according to Professor Geert Hofstede and colleagues’ comprehensive studies on national cultures (details see Appendix 1).

2.3.2 Cultural identity conflict and adaptation

It is proposed and empirically supported the identity conflict can be a useful indicator of cross-cultural adaptation, namely lower cultural identity conflict suggests better adaptation (e.g., Hernandez, Montgomery & Kurtines, 2006; Ward, 2008; Ward, Stuart & Kus, 2011). Before investigating into the relationship between identity conflict and adaptive outcomes, the definition and measurement of adaptation needs to be first articulated. Distinct from “acculturation” that commonly refers to a dynamic process of changes occurring as a result of cross-cultural interactions, adaptation usually means an outcome of such process and is defined as “the relatively stable changes that take place in an individual or group in response to external demands” (Berry, 2005, p. 709). In addition to that, two conceptually and empirically distinct forms of adaptive outcomes were proposed by Searle and Ward (1990), including psychological and sociocultural adaptation. Psychological adaptation mainly involves psychological wellbeing and satisfaction of life in the host culture and it is frequently assessed with regard to anxious and depressed mood (Ward, 1996). On the other

hand, sociocultural adaptation refers to how well an individual fits in with the host culture and negotiates daily cross-cultural contacts and it is usually assessed by a variety of social difficulty measures (Ward & Kennedy, 1994). Building on this theoretical model, a recent study by Ward, Stuart and Kus (2011) developed and validated an Ethno-cultural Identity Conflict Scale and has found that cultural identity conflict is associated with lowered life satisfaction, more psychological distress symptoms, and greater sociocultural difficulties by assessing the relationship between cultural identity conflict and adaptation. In line with this, Hernandez, Montgomery and Kurtines (2006) also found out that identity distress engendered by loyalties towards multiple groups was associated with poor psychological adjustment which was measured in the forms of self-reported problem behaviours such as anxious and depressed behaviours.

However, despite the evidence that the further understanding of cultural identity conflict can make promising contribution to cross-cultural transition research, limited attention has been paid to research on cultural identity conflict especially in terms of empirical studies (Leong & Ward, 2000; Lin, 2008; Stuart & Ward, 2011; Ward, Stuart & Kus, 2011). As a representative researcher specialised in this research field, Ward and colleagues (Ward, Stuart & Kus, 2011) suggested two major factors associated with this overlook, including: (1) the constraint related to the predominant position of Berry's (1974, 1984 & 1997) bidimensional model of acculturation attitudes/strategies and (2) lack of adequate assessment instruments for the measure of cultural identity conflict.

To articulate the former factor, the background of Berry (1974, 1984 & 1997) acculturation model needs first to be introduced. Berry's model is developed based on acculturating people's responses to two underlying questions arising from intercultural interactions: (1) the desire to maintain one's heritage culture and identity and (2) the desire to engage in daily interactions with other cultural groups in the host society. These two questions intersect to generate four acculturation categories (also referred as attitudes, strategies, preferences and modes), as explicitly shown in Table 2.

Table 2 – Acculturation orientations

Relationship sought among groups	Maintenance of heritage cultural and identity	
	Yes	No
Yes	Integration	Assimilation
No	Separation	Marginalization

Source: Berry (1974, 1984, 1997)

There has been a large body of research based on this model, which shows its significant contribution to understanding individuals' responses and strategies when confronting commitments between home and host cultures. However, as criticised by Ward (2008), a wide array of studies focusing on Berry's model have often considered the four acculturation orientations as static outcomes and have overlooked the processes before arriving at these orientations. It is still not clear addressed that how people feel and react while engaging in two different cultures that might contains incompatible values. Do they feel torn apart from competing demands? Does the degree of such subjective feelings of conflict influences people's choices of which culture(s) to conform to, and vice versa? Berry (2009) suggested that when cultural incompatibility occurs, individuals were not likely to choose integration (i.e., maintain heritage cultures while engaging with the host culture) as their acculturation strategy; instead, other strategies (particularly separation and marginalisation) are most common strategies. This claim, if it was true, brings about high doubt in terms of the practicability of integration in reality because individuals might experience more or less confusion and struggle between their host and home cultures which are not completely identical. Therefore, this study speculates that people who are prone to integration strategy may experience different processes of integrating two cultures that are likely associated with different extent of identity conflict .

2.3.3 Measurement of cultural identity conflict

With regard to another impediment in carrying out cultural identity conflict studies, there are still relatively limited measurement tools of cultural identity conflict. In Ward, Stuart and Kus's (2011) review of existing identity conflict instruments (see Table 3), they stated some concerns and suggested future avenues of measuring ethno-cultural identity conflict. The first concern is limited evidence for the validity of the measures. Within the examples in Table 3, except Ward, Stuart and Kus's (2011) scale that demonstrates good convergent validity through its correlation and coherence with other identity and self-concept measures, other identity conflict measures only exhibit acceptable level of internal consistency by showing Cronbach's Alphas in the literature. Second, Ward, Stuart and Kus (2011) argued that measures which exclusively focus on the emotional aspects of identity conflict (I feel...) were not adequate to construct the complexity of identity conflict experiences. Cognitive elements such as "I think..." were suggested to be included due to the importance of cognitive judgments in defining the level of compatibility of demands from host and home cultures as well as individuals' identity conflict experience. In light of the

comparison, the current research employs Ward, Stuart and Kus's (2011) approach to measure the levels of cultural identity conflict experienced by Chinese international students.

Table 3 – Examples of cultural identity conflict scales

Author (s)	Participants	No. of items	Examples of statements	Aspects	Evidence of validity
Leong & Ward (2000)	Chinese sojourners in Singapore	14	“Ever since I arrived in Singapore, I have felt a sense of loss and confusion.” “I have a clear idea of my purpose and objective here.”	Affective Cognitive	Cronbach's Alphas for the scale were generally above 0.80
Benet-Martínez & Haritatos (2005)	First-generation Chinese Americans	4	“I feel caught between the American and Chinese ways of doing things.”	Affective Cultural level	Incorporating past qualitative literature; Cronbach's Alphas were 0.74
Lin (2008)	Chinese and Taiwanese international students in New Zealand	18	“I can accept my new role and social status in New Zealand.” “Ever since I arrived in New Zealand, I have felt a sense of loss and confusion”	Affective Behavioural Contextual	Adapted from Leong and Ward (2000); Cronbach's Alphas were 0.82
Ward, Stuart & Kus (2011)	Immigrants in New Zealand	20	“I am sometimes confused about who I really am.” “I am an outsider in both my own ethnic group and the wider society.” “I am confused about the different demands placed on me by family and other people.”	Affective Cognitive Contextual	Cronbach's Alphas were 0.92 and 0.89 in two studies Strong associations with other identity and self-concept measures (self-concept clarity; sense of coherence; identity distress; bicultural identity integration-the cultural conflict)

2.3.4 Predictors of cultural identity conflict

In order to explore the usefulness of concepts of cultural identity conflict in the investigation of acculturation, it is important to understand the positive and negative predisposing factors of cultural identity conflict (Stuart & Ward, 2011). This is also consistent with Baumeister, Shapiro and Tice's (1985) call for future research to consider the correlates and predictors of identity conflict. So far, despite limited attention paid to this field of research, according to Ward's (2008) review on ethno-cultural identity and a series of studies in this field (e.g., Leong & Ward, 2008; Lin, 2008; Stuart & Ward, 2011), predictors that have been identified as relevant generally fall under four categories: (1) individual

differences that mainly involve personality characteristics, (2) developmental factors which specifically refer to individuals' developmental status of ethnic identity and host identity, (3) family values and relations which are particularly salient for immigrant youth, and (4) intergroup factors pertaining to relational issues such as racial discrimination and frequency and quality of intergroup contacts. Accordingly, this section of literature review provides a broad examination of these key domains and some specific variables in order to identify relevant variables that can be employed in the predictive model of the current study. Hypotheses and research questions relating to each predictor are proposed following the corresponding reviews. As the subjects of the current study are Chinese international students who are categorised into the sojourner group and most of their families may not reside in the host country. Therefore, family-related variables are excluded in the following discussion because family-related factors such as family support and discrepancy between family values and host culture's values might exert a less important influence on students' acculturation attitudes and behaviours compared with immigrants.

2.3.4.1 Personality Traits

Personality characteristics have been used excessively to predict individual differences in various behaviours under a wide range of contexts (Ozer & Benet-Martínez, 2006). Empirical evidence has shown that ability to adjust both psychologically and socioculturally in intercultural contexts varies between individuals (e.g., Church, 1982; Searle & Ward, 1990; Ward & Kennedy, 1994; Swagler & Jome, 2005). It has been argued and empirically found that this is partly attributed to difference in individual personalities; some characteristics might facilitate the acculturation process whereas others might exert negative influence on cross-cultural adjustment (Huang, Chi & Lawler, 2005; Swagler & Jome, 2005; Ward, Leong & Low, 2004). As identity conflict is argued to be related to negative cross-cultural adjustment and negatively subjective feelings, personality traits might be linked to the degree of identity conflict.

The development of the Five-Factor Model of Personality, also called the Big Five framework (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Goldberg, 1992) facilitates research with regard to the links between personality and intercultural adjustment as it can better capture the dimensions of individuals' personality traits. The Big Five model (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Goldberg, 1992) usually includes five personality dimensions which are neuroticism/emotional instability (lessened emotional control and stability as well as the degree of being susceptible to stress), extroversion (a tendency to sociability and characteristics such as warmth,

assertiveness, talkativeness and gregariousness), openness to experience (a tendency to actively seek out new experiences), conscientiousness (a tendency towards achievement and respect to social roles, duties) and agreeableness (a tendency of cooperativeness and conform to the norms of other people).

There is ongoing controversy and inconsistency in terms of the predictive power of specific personality characteristics on cross-cultural experience and adaptation (Ward, Leong & Low, 2004). However, openness to experience has frequently been identified as one of the key characteristics of well-adapted sojourners, as reviewed by Swagler and Jome (2005). Individuals high on openness to experience tend to appreciate different ideas and actively absorb new environmental stimuli (McCrae & Costa, 1997). They also have better ability to tolerate the ambiguity associated with unfamiliar experiences such as studying in a different and new country (Swagler & Jome, 2005). In Leong and Ward's (2008) study of identity conflict in Chinese international students in Singapore, they found that greater tolerance of ambiguity predicted lower levels of identity conflict. Moreover, neuroticism or emotional instability has been found to negatively relate to both psychological and sociocultural adjustment. For example, a study of Singaporean students in Australia and Chinese Singaporeans in Singapore showed that less neuroticism is associated with both groups' psychological wellbeing and sociocultural adaptation (Ward, Leong & Low, 2004). Furthermore, openness to experience and low neuroticism both notably predicted a coherent and integrated cultural identity (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos 2005). In other words, individuals who are being closed to new experiences and emotionally unstable are likely to suffer from cultural identity conflict. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed.

Hypothesis 1: openness to experience and emotional stability will significantly lead to lower levels of cultural identity conflict.

Extroversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness have also been found to affect cross-cultural adjustment but empirical results are mixed (Swagler & Jome, 2005). For example, in terms of extroversion, Searle and Ward's (1990) study showed that extroversion predicted better psychological well-being in a sample of Malaysian and Singaporean students in New Zealand; in contrast, another study of native English-speaking expatriates in Singapore indicated that extroversion was positively linked with feelings of boredom, frustration and depression (Armes & Ward, 1989). To explain the divergence, Ward, Leong and Low (2004) speculated that this was because the influence of personality on adjustment might be moderated by how fit individual characteristics were with the cultural norms in the host

culture. In other words, extroversion may only facilitate intercultural encounters when being extroverted is also preferred in the receiving society. Therefore, considering there has been no settled conclusions with regard to the effect of extroversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness on intercultural adjustment, the following research question was posed in the current study.

Research question 1: Is there a significant relationship between extroversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness and cultural identity conflict?

2.3.4.2 Identity-related predictors

According to Baumeister, Shapiro and Tice's (1985) identity conflict model, one of two prerequisites to experience identity conflict is to commit to more than one identity components which represent, in this context, multiple cultural identities. However, what was not clearly addressed in Baumeister, Shapiro and Tice's (1985) theory is if the degrees of orientation to heritage and receiving cultures affect the level of cultural identity conflict – that is, does stronger ethnic identity or host cultural identity help minimise/exacerbate identity conflict?

2.3.4.2.1 Ethnic identity

Numerous empirical studies in cross-cultural psychology indicate a positive relationship between a high-level ethnic identity and psychological outcomes (e.g., Oppedal, Roysamb & Heyerdahl, 2005; Phinney et al., 2001; Smith & Silva, 2010; Ward & Kennedy, 1994; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 2000). In light of this evidence, scholars assume that a strong and positive ethnic identity is able to moderate acculturative stress, anxiety or distress experienced by ethnic minority groups (e.g., Ponterotto & Park-Taylor, 2007). The rationale behind these findings is mainly drawn on social identity research; a collective identification forms part of self-concepts and might be closely associated with self-acceptance and self-esteem (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Accordingly, a positive and strong home-culture identity is argued to be able to help individuals recognise and reinforce positive attributes of their own cultural groups, thus alleviating the negative consequences associated with perceiving oneself as a member of a disadvantaged group in the host society (Outten, Schmitt, Garcia & Branscombe, 2009; Romero & Roberts, 2003). In other words, individuals with a strong ethnic identity may have a better sense of who they are and a higher acceptance of themselves, so they are less likely to experience identity conflict. To add to that, Outten et al., (2009) pointed out that a sense of shared ethnic identity can also provide social support and a sense of belonging and security

which can enhance one's resilience when he or she is faced with stressful difficulties in the process of cross-cultural transition. In light of the findings, the following hypothesis was proposed.

Hypothesis 2a: stronger ethnic identity (exploration, commitment and centrality) will significantly protect against identity conflict and negative experiences associated with it.

Although it has been widely recognised that ethnic identity plays a positive role in migrants' wellbeing in acculturation process, some scholars have found that for individuals who are frequently exposed to racial discrimination, a high ethnic identity might lead to lower psychological adjustment (Lee, 2005; Yip, Gee & Takeuchi, 2008; Yoo & Lee, 2008). This is because, according to Yoo and Lee (2008), compared with individuals who have low-level ethnic identity, those with high-level ethnic identity may act more sensitively and intensely to status-based rejection and exclusion from the dominant society because they tend to invest more in and attach more emotional significance to their ethnic groups. Consequently, chronic racial discrimination may exacerbate the possibility of distress and depression among those identifying strongly with their heritage culture, challenge their self-concept and sense of coherence associated with ethnic identity, thereby worsening psychological adjustment. Despite the strong evidence of ethnic identity's protective effect in cross-cultural adjustment research and in the particular line of cultural identity conflict studies (e.g., Leong & Ward, 2008; Stuart & Ward, 2011), the moderating effect of discrimination on the relationship between ethnic identity and identity conflict is worth discovering for the present study. Therefore, this study made the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2b: For participants who have experienced high level of discrimination, a strong ethnic identity (exploration, commitment and centrality) will lead to greater cultural identity conflict.

2.3.4.2.2 Host cultural identity

Different from ethnic identity exerting a primary influence on the psychological domain of cross-cultural adjustment, host-culture identity is considered to be more likely related to sociocultural adjustment (e.g., Ward & Kennedy, 1994; Ward & Rana-Deueba, 1999). For example, in Ward and Kennedy's (1994) study of New Zealand employees who were heavily involved in overseas assignments and placements, it was found that New Zealand sojourners with a strong identification with New Zealand culture reported less depression during foreign placements; on the other hand, those with a strong identification with host cultures

experienced less difficulties when negotiating daily social interactions because they inclined to interact with the host-nationals in a way the new cultural environment expects and demands.

In light of the strong link between host cultural identity and sociocultural adaptation in the previous literature, some studies attempted to explore the relationship between cultural identity conflict and host cultural identity (Leong & Ward, 2008; Stuart & Ward, 2011). However, both Leong and Ward's (2008) and Stuart and Ward's (2011) research indicated no significant relationship between identity conflict and host cultural identity. Nevertheless, Stuart and Ward (2011) showed the potential value to explore host cultural identity's effect on identity conflict by investigating the interactions between ethnic and host cultural identity in prediction of identity conflict. Their study reported when a strong host cultural identity was combined with a high level of ethnic identity exploration, individuals were at higher risk of experiencing cultural identity conflict. They explained that the reason behind this finding might be when one already has a strong sense of commitment to the host culture and is still exploring the meaning of his or her ethnic identity, the meaning of their host-culture identity may be questioned as ethnic exploration goes on, thereby increasing the risk of identity conflict. Therefore, the current study proposed two research questions which are concerned about the main relationship between host cultural identity and identity conflict, and the interaction effect between host- and home-culture identities on identity conflict respectively.

Research question 2a: Is there a significant relationship between host cultural identity (exploration and commitment) and cultural identity conflict?

Research question 2b: Is there an interaction effect between components of ethnic identity and host cultural identity on cultural identity conflict?

2.3.4.3 Intergroup predictors

Besides individual differences and identity-related factors, studies particularly in terms of predictors of cultural identity conflict (Leong & Ward, 2008; Lin, 2008; Stuart & Ward, 2011) highlighted the powerful effects of intergroup variables on levels of cultural identity conflict during cross-cultural transition. This is because intergroup contacts are effective sources of shaping people's ideas of themselves and others, and their social behaviours. Therefore, this section discuss about the intergroup-related variables that were identified to exert a significant influence on the level of identity conflict in the previous literature, which include attachment styles, quality and quantity of contacts with host-nationals and co-

nationals, sojourners' perceived discrimination in the host society, and perceived intergroup permeability.

2.3.4.3.1 Attachment styles

Attachment styles refer to "the propensity of human beings to make strong affectional bonds to particular others" (Bowlby, 1977, p. 201) and it serves as a guide to behaviours and perceptions in interpersonal relationships. Originally, attachment theory was developed by Bowlby (1973, 1977 & 1980) to depict children's relation to their caretakers and this early attachment relationship experienced in childhood is considered to be internalised over time and continue to exert an influence on attachment behaviours for later life. Based on this notion of continuity of attachment-related behaviours, research on attachment models in adulthood has developed. One of the most representative studies on the influence of attachment styles in adulthood was conducted by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991). They advanced a theoretical model of attachment styles in adulthood based on two orthogonal dimensions: (1) whether a person's self image is worthy of love and support or not (model of self) and (2) whether a person sees others as trustworthy and available or not (model of others). Derived from the combination of these two dimensions, four categories of attachment styles were generated (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991) – secure attachment (a person has a positive image of self and trust in others), preoccupied attachment (a person has a negative image of self but he or she sees others as trustworthy), fearful attachment (a person does not think self deserves love and support and does not trust others either) and dismissive attachment (a person has a positive image of self but does not trust others). The previous research shows different people may approximate to different styles and their styles of attachment influence the quality of dyadic intimate relationships especially in a stressful or uncertain situation (e.g., Simpson, Rholes & Nelligan, 1992).

Furthermore, attachment theory has recently been adapted to shed light on how people see themselves in group contexts and their affection towards the groups they orient to (Hofstra, Van Oudenhoven & Buunk, 2005; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2001; Smith, Murphy & Coats, 1999; Van Oudenhoven & Hofstra, 2006). Specifically, according to Mikulincer and Shaver (2001), in an intercultural context, because securely attached people have a sense of secure base generated from their positive image of the self and trust in others, they are generally more confident in social interactions with people who express dissimilar or negative opinions about their ethnic values, more open-minded to alternative values and more

accepting of people belonging to their outgroups (i.e., host nationals). That is, securely attached individuals might be more capable of forming harmonious relationships with both host- and co-nationals and effectively integrating aspects of two different cultures into their identity. Therefore, secure attachment is assumed to be negatively associated with identity conflict and this has been supported by Stuart and Ward's (2011) test of relationship between secure attachment and identity conflict. Moreover, in Stuart and Ward's (2011) predictive model of identity conflict, preoccupied attachment was also found as a very strong predictor and was positively related to identity conflict. This finding is in line with previous research (Van Oudenhoven & Hofstra, 2006) that indicated as preoccupied individuals thought negatively of themselves but trusted others and aspired to be liked by others, they might strive to be accepted and included by both host and home cultures; however, the low and insecure self-image combined with strong attachment to two cultures might trigger ambivalence about their self-images and relationships with both nationals. In light of these finding, the following hypotheses were proposed.

Hypothesis 3a: Secure attachment will significantly lead to lower levels of cultural identity conflict.

Hypothesis 3b: Preoccupied attachment will significantly increase the levels of cultural identity conflict.

Despite some findings indicating the relationship between other two remaining attachment styles (dismissive and fearful attachment) and adaptation, so far there has been no significant relationship found between these two attachment modes and identity conflict. Therefore, the following research question was proposed to explore how the other two styles relate to identity conflict.

Research question 3: Do dismissive and fearful attachment have a significant association with cultural identity conflict?

2.3.4.3.2 Quality and quantity of contacts with host nationals and co-nationals

Both home and host national relations were assumed to affect cross-cultural adjustment of sojourners (e.g., Abe, Talbot & Geelhoed, 1998; Ward & Kennedy, 1993; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 2000). Theoretically speaking, this may be because both groups can provide social support and connectedness which help minimise feelings of loneliness and isolation among

acculturating individuals (Furnham & Alibhai, 1985) and also provide them with opportunities of promoting a deeper understanding in two cultures (Brislin, 1981).

However, empirical studies have shown controversial results in terms of effects of co- and host-national relations on cross-cultural adaptation. Specifically, with regard to co-national relationship, some studies have shown a positive relationship between frequent contacts with co-nationals, quality of contacts and sojourners' psychological wellbeing. This can be explained by the powerfully protective role of social network support and a sense of security and familiarity achieved through building relations with co-nationals within an unfamiliar foreign environment (e.g., Ward & Kennedy, 1993; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 2000). Other studies, however, reported that excessive contacts with co-nationals in the long run might result in international students' low satisfaction in cross-cultural social experiences and lack of engagement in a new culture, eventually leading to feelings of being out of place (e.g., Kitsantas, 2004; Pedersen, Neighbors, Larimer & Lee, 2011). A plausible explanation of the inconsistent findings may be that support from home-nationals are initially easier to gain and exert strongly positive effects on early cross-cultural transition particularly in terms of the psychological aspects (i.e., minimising homesickness, depression or distress). However, in the long term, although it might be highly satisfying, spending too much time with co-nationals may lead to overlook of participation in the wider society, thereby producing difficulties in cross-cultural social interactions. In other words, frequent contacts with co-nationals might only be beneficial in the early stage of cross-cultural transition. Therefore, the following two hypotheses were proposed in this study.

Hypothesis 4a: Higher quality of contacts with other Chinese will significantly lead to lower levels of cultural identity conflict.

Hypothesis 4b: High quantity of contacts with other Chinese will significantly lead to lower levels of cultural identity conflict only for the participants who have resided in the host country for a short period of time.

In regard to host national relations, the findings are also mixed. Through a review of existing literature, the current study argues that besides the discrepancy caused by sample variance, the seemingly contradictory findings may be resulted from different measurement of relationships with host nationals. That is, some studies focused on the quantity of interactions with host nationals while others used the quality of the interactions. For example, Ward and Kennedy's (1993) research found that more frequent contacts with host nationals

was linked with increased psychological distress whereas Ward and Rana-Deuba's (2000) study pointed to a negative relationship between satisfaction with the quality of host-national relations and depressive mood states (i.e., mood disturbance). This suggests that in order to investigate the effects of host-national relationships on cultural identity conflict, both the quantity and quality of interactions should be assessed. In some cases frequent contacts with host culture do not directly result in efficient learning and better understanding of host culture; instead, these interactions are likely to cause more adjustment problems if they are superficial and unequal. Therefore, this study proposes that satisfying relations with host-nationals will predict lower levels of identity conflict as satisfying experiences of interacting with members of host cultures can promote individuals' understanding of host culture as well as help build strong sense of social connectedness associated with the majority group. Moreover, the current study assumes that whether frequent contacts with dominant groups lead to positive cross-cultural adaption may be closely related to the quality of these contacts. Hence, the interaction effect between quantity and quality of contacts with host Nationals on identity conflict might be of some value to investigate into too. In light of the discussion, the following hypotheses were developed:

Hypothesis 4c: Higher quality of contacts with host nationals will significantly lead to lower levels of cultural identity conflict.

Hypothesis 4d: Frequent contacts with host nationals will significantly increase the risk of cultural identity conflict only when participants report low-level quality of contacts with host nationals.

2.3.4.3.3 Perceived discrimination

Perceived discrimination represents a belief that one is treated unfairly or negatively because of his or her personal attributes such as ethnicity, race, or gender and so on (Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder, 2006). Most acculturation literature yielded consistent findings suggesting that perceived discrimination from the host society is closely related to maladaptation of ethnic minorities by acting as a stressor linked to psychological problems (e.g., Liebkind & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000; Noh & Kaspar, 2003). The concepts of reciprocity in intergroup attitudes can be drawn from to explain the effect of perceived discrimination upon how sojourners adapt to a new culture. According to "reciprocity" phenomenon between groups, like or dislike between two groups tends to be reciprocated; that is, if group A likes group B, Group B tends to like Group A and the same goes with the dislike case

(Kalin & Berry, 1996). In view of that, in some sense, discrimination can be considered as inconsistency between attitudes of ethnic minorities and the host society toward each other. It means if migrants perceive themselves to be discriminated (i.e., be disliked) by the receiving society, a state of conflict about their engagement with the host society may arise in the case where they “like” the host society, which may lead to decreased orientation to host culture. Lalonde, Taylore, and Moghaddam’s (1992) study supported such proposition; it showed chronic perceived discrimination was associated with a reduced orientation towards the host culture. In light of the information, it is expected in the present study that perceived discrimination will be positively related to cultural identity conflict and the following hypothesis was proposed.

Hypothesis 5: Perceived discrimination will significantly lead to higher levels of cultural identity conflict.

2.3.4.3.4 Perceived intergroup permeability

According to social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), individuals’ group membership can change by leaving their own group and join another group. However, in some circumstances, intergroup boundaries are hard to be crossed. Accordingly, perceived intergroup permeability is a construct to describe the degree to which individuals believe boundaries between their own groups and other groups are open (Terry, Pelly, Lalonde & Smith, 2006). As sojourners were sometimes observed to perceive themselves as disadvantaged groups or be categorised by others into low-status groups through intergroup social comparisons in a host culture (e.g., Berry, 1997; Lalonde, Taylore & Moghaddam, 1992), perceptions of high impermeability of the host-culture structure might worsen the perceptions of social disadvantage or discrimination among them (Lalonde & Cameron, 1993), leading to a negative self-concept. Moreover, it might be unrealistic for sojourners to be socially included into the receiving society under the condition of highly impermeable boundaries. Thus, perceptions of such impermeability can engender conflict between aspiration of inclusion in the host society and perceived failure to do so. In line with that, Lin (2008) proposed that sojourners who believed that the intergroup structures were impermeable for them to become members of the host society would experience higher levels of identity conflict and the research carried out on a sample of mainland Chinese and Taiwanese aged between 16 and 28 supported this hypothesis. Therefore, the current study proposed the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 6: Perceived intergroup impermeability will significantly lead to higher levels of cultural identity conflict.

2.4 Cultural Identity Negotiation Strategy

Following the discussion of the predictors above, this section is going to shed some light on individuals' varied reactions to encounters between two different cultures (i.e., heritage and host culture) and their potential links to identity conflict. As discussed in previous sections, sojourners' cultural identity is very likely to face change resulted from divergence between their self-concepts related to ethnic identity and perceptions of host societies' demands (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001). Hence, they need to negotiate the ways in which they internalise two cultures in order to create a self-coherence in different contexts, which are conceptualised as "Cultural Identity Negotiation Strategies" in the current study. That is, mainly drawn on Berry's (1974, 1984 & 1997) overarching theory of fourfold acculturation strategies (i.e., assimilation, separation, integration and marginalisation), and biculturalism research (Birman, 1994; LaFromboise, Coleman & Gerton, 1993, Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997).

Individuals who are prone to Berry's (1974, 1984 & 1997) integration strategy are also conceptualised as "biculturals" by biculturalism scholars (Hong, Morris, Chui & Benet-Martínez, 2000) and the process of integrating two cultural orientations or identification configuration of both cultures is described as "biculturalism" (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005). Integration or biculturalism has been revealed in a great many research as the most preferred negotiation strategy among migrant people (e.g. Berry & Sam, 1997; van de Vijver, Helms-Lorenz, & Feltzer, 1999). Furthermore, a recent meta-analysis by Nguyen and Benet-Martínez (2013) including 83 studies with 23,197 participants found that biculturalism was strongly associated with positive psychological and sociocultural outcomes. On the other hand, the other strategies are often considered and found to lead to less favourable outcomes (e.g., Ward & Kennedy, 1994)

It is noted that the validation of Berry's marginalisation strategy as an approach to negotiate one's heritage and receiving cultures has been problematic. Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga and Szapocznik (2010) argued that an individual was very unlikely to develop a sense of cultural self without drawing on any culture. In line with this argument, previous studies revealed no or small marginalisation groups by using clustering methods (e.g., Schwartz & Zamboanga, 2008) or qualitative interview methods (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997). In light of that, marginalisation strategy was omitted from consideration in this study.

2.4.1 Relationships between Cultural Identity Conflict and Negotiation Strategies

Despite much literature investigating adaptive outcomes of these different identity negotiation strategies, there is very limited research examining the relationship between the choices of negotiation strategies and identity conflict (Ward, Stuart & Kus, 2011). One of the attempts was made by Stuart and Ward (2011) who have tried to address this issue by analysing the predictive power of interactions between ethnic and national identity (host cultural identity) in identity conflict. The results indicated that individuals who adopted an integrated identity (i.e., the combination of strong ethnic identity centrality and national identity belongingness) experienced less cultural identity conflict. This supports the benefits of an integrated identity in promoting positive psychological adaptation found in previous literature (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013). However, Haritatos and Benet-Martínez (2003) noted that the process of integrating multiple cultural identities might be associated with both positive and negative experiences. That is, some individuals might succeed in developing a compatible bicultural identity with perceiving two cultures as non-oppositional and having a strong sense of pride and belonging relating to both cultures, while some people might be more prone to an incompatible bicultural identity with feelings of confusion resulted from dual expectations and value clashes. Hence, an important research question for the current study is whether integration predicts less identity conflict or not.

To address that question, it is necessary to first provide a thorough discussion of existing literature on integration strategy (biculturalism) especially the research gaps. So far the biculturalism research focuses on two issues which have not been addressed by Berry's theory, including individual variations in biculturalism and quantitative measures of these variations. The current study proposes that different subtypes of biculturalism might be associated with identity conflict in different ways. Therefore, the research is going to look into different types of biculturalism, in order to capture individual differences in organising and experiencing an integrated identity, and to examine how these variations relate to identity conflict experience and intercultural adaptation.

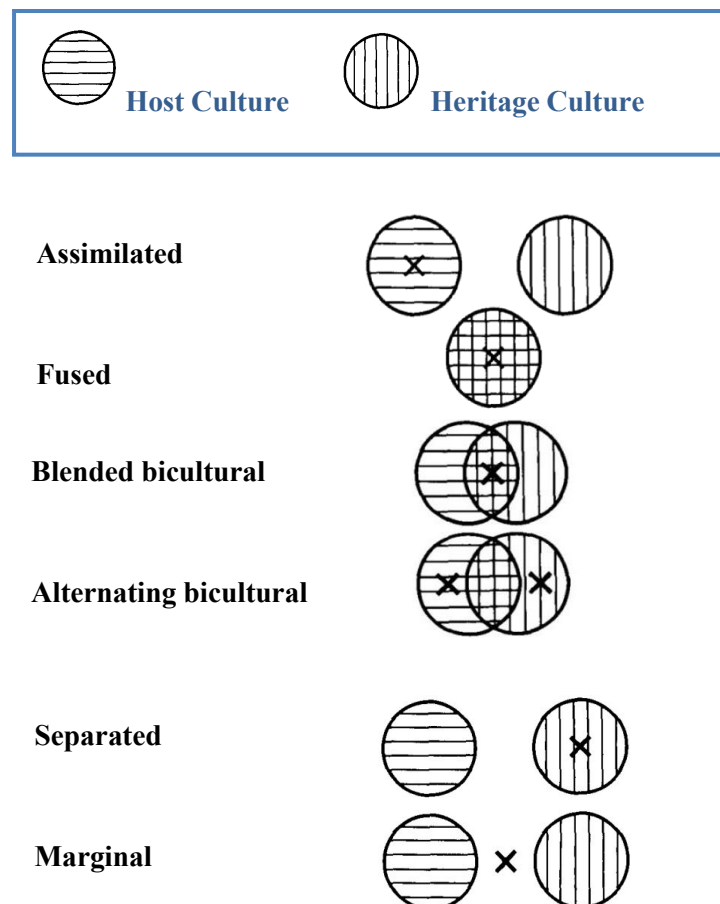
2.4.2 Variations in bicultural identity

As discussed in Section 2.3.2, Berry's concept of integration has been criticised to overlook the complexity of integrating two cultural identities and to fail to demonstrate how people go about integrating and retaining both cultures within them (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2007; Ward, 2008). To fill in this important gap, some studies (e.g., Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; LaFromboise, Coleman & Gerton, 1993) have explored variations in biculturals and attempted to define various and more

specific subtypes of biculturalism, which are the different processes of integrating host- and home- culture identities and participating in both cultures.

Among these attempts, Phinney and Devich-Navarro (1997) proposed a thorough conceptual model to clarify multiple types of negotiating two different cultures based on the models of Berry (1974, 1984, 1997), Birman (1994), and LaFromboise, Coleman and Gerton (1993) (Figure 2).

Figure 2 – Identity negotiation strategies based on the individuals’ perception of host and heritage culture (represented by circles) as separated, combined, or overlapping, and his or her position relative to each culture (represented by “X”)



Source: Phinney & Devich-Navarro (1997)

In this model, the circles represent the heritage culture and host culture that are negotiated by a member of an ethnic minority group. The "X" symbolises the individuals' self-position with regard to these two cultures. Besides assimilation, separation and marginalisation that have been well explained by Berry's model, Phinney and Devich-Navarro (1997) specified integration strategy (two cultures are overlapped to some extent) into three types, fusion, blending and alternation, based on the previous literature. Specifically, LaFromboise, Coleman and Gerton (1993) proposed fusion which was defined

as the true “melting pot” (p. 401). They suggested that two cultures sharing an economic, political, or geographic space were likely to be completely fused together until they were no longer distinguished, thus forming a new culture (i.e., a third culture). However, it was noted that this model lacked empirical support as there were few examples of achieving such a third culture (LaFromboise, Coleman & Gerton, 1993), which might be resulted from the ambiguous concept and resultant measurement difficulties. Similar to that, Birman’s (1994) framework also recognised the likelihood of fusing two cultures together but only to some extent, and individuals who adopted an integrated identity by combining certain not all aspects of two cultures (shown as occupying the overlap area of two cultures) were conceptualised as blended biculturals. On the other hand, individuals who moved between the two non-overlapping areas were referred to as alternating biculturals; they were assumed to be highly aware of the distinctions between two cultures, so that they kept two cultural identities separate and disconnected, and altered their behaviours depending on a particular social or cultural cue (LaFromboise, Coleman & Gerton, 1993).

These conceptual frameworks have greatly advanced the understanding of different ways to negotiate two cultures, but empirically, they are short of support. Phinney and Devich-Navarro (1997) expressed concerns about how closely these models matched with the actual experience of ethnic minorities. Ward (2013) also pointed out LaFromboise, Coleman and Gerton (1993) did not offer empirical data to support various types of biculturals and their adaptation levels; instead, they only developed a hypothetical model of relationships between second-culture adoption approaches and bicultural skill acquisition without an empirical test.

To tackle this salient issue, Phinney and Devich-Navarro (1997) sought to test different approaches to negotiation home and host cultures on African American and Mexican American adolescents by using a mixed method. A questionnaire was first used to assess participants’ degrees of both ethnic identity and American identity, self-concept and anxiety; a structured interview was then conducted, asking participants in terms of their sense of being part of two cultures (both negative and positive) and the ways in which they dealt with two cultures based on three main categories (combining two cultures, keeping them separate, or deemphasising the issue of culture), in order to probe different types of negotiation strategies from self-descriptions. Three identity negotiating patterns including blending (those who expressed positive attitudes about both cultures and did not feel them strongly conflicted and differentiated), alternation (those who also identified with both cultures but saw distinction and conflict between them), and separation (those who strongly identify with ethnic culture

but not mainstream culture) were found salient in the quantitative and qualitative data. Another recent attempt to obtain empirical evidence of the models has been carried out by Ward (2013) through a range of qualitative methods; she used projective identity mapping techniques, interviews, focus group discussions, and open-ended survey questions with young Muslim immigrants to examine their perspectives with regard to acculturation experiences and the strategies they used to negotiate multiple social identities. Blending and alternating strategies also emerged from the data. In line with that, Toomey, Dorjee and Ting-Toomey (2013) also conducted a narrative interview to extract identity negotiation patterns from Caucasian-Asians (those whose one parent is from Caucasian ethnic background and the other is from Asian ethnic background). Their study revealed blended and alternating biculturalism; most interviewees perceived their bicultural identity as blended/fused which was hard to be split but emphasised that they could manifest one identity based on interpersonal/intergroup situations.

These findings suggest the practicality of blending and alternation as categories of biculturalism in real experiences, so they are of more concern in this study. However, the studies reviewed above were carried out on immigrant groups instead of sojourner groups, indicating the value of investigating this topic among sojourners and the possibility of emerging different findings associated with the nature of sojourners.

In summary, the current study aims to discover the association between two subtypes of integration strategy (alternation and blending) and cultural identity conflict. Along with that, the effects of acculturation strategies in Berry's model (i.e., assimilation, separation, integration (general)) on identity conflicts will also be examined and confirmed against the evidence in previous acculturation literature. Hence, the following hypothesis and research question were proposed.

Hypothesis 7: higher preference in integration strategy (general) will lead to lower levels of cultural identity conflict compared with assimilation and separation strategy.

Research question 4: how does blending and alternation strategy influence cultural identity conflict?

In addition, the current study is interested in which strategy is most preferred and well adopted by Chinese students and accordingly, how being chosen as the predominant strategy would influence strategies' relationships with cultural identity conflict. Consequently, it is proposed that there might be of some value to compare the effects of choosing a certain

strategy as the predominant strategy on identity conflict. Thus, the following research question was posed.

Research question 5: Is there a difference between the effect of choosing assimilation, separation and integration (general, blending and alternation) as the predominant negotiation strategy on cultural identity conflict?

2.4.3 Measurement of Biculturalism

To advance biculturalism research, another issue is the lack of instruments measuring various types of biculturals. A careful review of existing instruments and relevant psychometric issues in measuring biculturalism is beyond the scope of this research. However, based on Nguyen and Benet-Martínez's (2007) brief review of measures of bicultural/integrated strategies, it can be seen that biculturalism or integration have usually been operationalised as an uniform construct, emerging as scoring high on both ethnic and host identities (bidimensional scales) or on integration subscales that depict favourable attitudes toward both cultures (direct measurement). These instruments have yet captured subtypes of biculturalism such as alternating or blending. In terms of that, Celenk and van de Vijver (2014) and Ward (2013) have suggested that the development and construction of specific measures of these biculturalism models should be a priority in the future biculturalism and acculturation research, in order to test the relationship between integration and adaption. In response to this call, this study will try to develop subscales for alternation and blending strategies to further the understanding of the link between variations of integration, identity conflict and intercultural competence, drawn on relevant qualitative findings in these topics. More details will be presented in methodology chapter.

2.5 Intercultural Competence

One of the primary purposes of this study is to investigate adaptive outcomes of cultural identity conflict and different identity negotiation processes in intercultural contexts. This is in order to raise attention of sojourning individuals, educational institutions and the wider host societies to the hindering consequence of cultural identity conflict in intercultural encountering scenes. It also helps gain deeper insights into which negotiation approaches should be strongly promoted and facilitated. Of the particular interest to this study is the adaptive outcome from a competence perspective, namely "intercultural competence", and especially the affective component, intercultural sensitivity. This section addresses the rationale for choosing intercultural competence as an outcome measure and its potential

relationship with cultural identity conflict and negotiation strategies (particularly integration strategies).

2.5.1 Rationale of Using Intercultural Competence as an Outcome Measure

A broad definition of “intercultural competence” is “the overall capacity of an individual to enact behaviours and activities that foster cooperative relationships with culturally (or ethnically) dissimilar others” (Kim, 2009, p. 54). As briefly mentioned in Section 2.3.2, some evidence of the significant relationship between cultural identity conflict and cross-cultural adaptation has been found in the literature (e.g., Hernandez, Montgomery & Kurtines, 2006; Ward, Stuart & Kus, 2011). Some scholars in the field of intercultural competence argued that there is an interweaved link between intercultural competence and adaptation; adaptation occurred in the intercultural interactions has been treated as a self-evident foundation for intercultural competence as it represents an outcome that is characterised as culturally appropriate and effective attitudes and behaviours adept to a relative culture (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). However, unlike cross-cultural adaptation that is usually measured by subjective wellbeing status and sociocultural difficulties in general (Searle & Ward, 1990), intercultural competence particularly evaluates a set of specific skills and abilities which enhance cross-cultural interactions. Considering international students are the studying population of the current research, intercultural competence which focuses more on the criterion of “how to” act in intercultural encounters was proposed to be more meaningful to draw insights from for this group of subjects.

2.5.2 Cultural Identity Conflict and Intercultural Competence

According to Baumeister, Shapiro and Tice (1985) and Ting-Toomey (2009), experiencing conflicts relating to one’s cultural identities may well result in being overwhelmed with such emotions as helplessness to decide on a certain commitment to fulfill and guilt of betraying on the other. Such conflicts are also likely to distort or reconstruct one’s existing belief systems. As cultural identity was seen as “an anchoring point” (p. 102) for acculturating people’s day-to-day intercultural interactions (Ting-Toomey, 2009), it is imaginable that cultural identity conflict would exert a destructive impact on individuals’ affective, cognitive and behavioural responses to intercultural encounters and interactions. Hence, it was proposed in this study that cultural identity conflict would hinder the development of Chinese students’ intercultural sensitivity as follows.

2.5.3 Biculturalism and Intercultural Competence

Due to the harmful role identity conflict may play in the intercultural encountering process, the ways in which individuals negotiate the internalisation of different cultures might also influence the quality of their general intercultural interaction. Based on Berry's (1974, 1984, 1997) acculturation model and biculturalism theories (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; LaFromboise, Coleman & Gerton, 1993), biculturals may well suffer less from acculturative stress, psychologically and socioculturally adapt better to a new cultural environment, and their experiences might be more beneficial than living monoculturally. This is because biculturals who engage in both cultures possess higher levels of social and cognitive flexibility and can develop culturally appropriate behaviours better which can protect them from adjustment problems (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2007).

Furthermore, LaFromboise, Coleman and Gerton (1993) identified a range of skills needed to develop competence in a second culture as well as to maintain competence in the host culture (i.e., bicultural competence), so as to effectively living in both cultures. They proposed that the models of second-culture adoption may influence acquisition of those skills associated with bicultural competence; and the alternation model stood out as the one proposed to best facilitate the development of such skills including knowledge of cultural beliefs and values, positive attitudes towards two groups, bicultural efficacy (the belief that one can develop and maintain effective interpersonal relationships in two cultures), communication competency, role repertoire (the range of culturally or situationally appropriate behaviours or roles an individual has developed) and groundedness (the experience of having a well-developed social support system). However, this speculation by LaFromboise, Coleman and Gerton (1993) was based on assumptions of bicultural models instead of empirical data.

In contrast to LaFromboise, Coleman and Gerton's (1993) strong support in advantages of alternation strategy for development of bicultural competence, Benet-Martínez, Leu, Lee & Morris (2002) provided some different insights based on an experiment. Drawn on cultural frame switching theory (Hong, Morris, Chiu & Benet-Martínez, 2000), Benet-Martínez et al. (2002) found that Chinese American biculturals who perceived host and ethnic cultures as highly distinct, separate and conflicting (labelled as "alternating biculturals" in Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997) responded to cultural stimuli in the opposite way (i.e., reverse priming effect), behaving in a more American characteristically way when exposed to Chinese cues and behaving in a more Chinese characteristically way when exposed to American cues. They argued this might be because these biculturals chronically polarise two

cultures so that a cognitive linking of the two cultural meaning systems might be formed. This means when exposed to certain cultural stimuli, activation of that cultural system may spread to the other system. Due to the perceived distinction between two systems, affective and behavioural resistance against the cultural cues may be triggered, eventually leading to contrast cultural behaviours. Consequently, Benet-Martínez et al. (2002) suggested that this may affect individuals' bicultural competence because they might consistently behave in culturally inappropriate and inept ways in particular situations. However, given the experimental nature of their study, they were not able to examine the actual behavioural responses to cultural cues in real life. Instead, they projected responses based on participants' interpretation of cultural-related information. That leaves the room for debate on if alternating biculturals actually behave in culturally reverse ways in their everyday lives.

2.5.4 Intercultural Sensitivity as a Precursor of Intercultural Competence

Given the complexity and multidimensionality of intercultural competence, this study decides to focus on intercultural sensitivity (i.e., the affective dimension) because it has often been considered as an important precursor to higher intercultural competence (Hammer, Bennett & Wiseman, 2003). A loose definition of intercultural sensitivity is “the ability to discriminate and experience relevant cultural differences” (Hammer, Bennett & Wiseman, 2003). To be more specific, Chen and Starosta (1997) viewed intercultural sensitivity as one's desire and motivation to understand, appreciate, and accept differences between cultures so as to achieve positive outcomes from intercultural relations. Furthermore, Bhawuk and Brislin (1992) emphasised the significance of developing a sense of sensitivity in intercultural interactions by stating, “to be effective in another culture, people must be interested in other cultures, be sensitive enough to notice cultural differences, and then also be willing to modify their behaviour as an indication of respect for the people of other cultures” (p. 416).

Much research has shown the relationship among intercultural sensitivity, intercultural competence and intercultural experiences. The literature found that high intercultural sensitivity was associated with better intercultural communication skills, healthy interpersonal relationships with individuals from different cultural backgrounds, and positive intercultural experiences (e.g., Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992; Dong, Day & Collaco, 2009; Williams, 2005). For example, in the Dong, Day and Collaco's (2009) study with 419 undergraduate students, it was found that increased intercultural sensitivity helped mediate negative outcomes associated with ethnocentrism (e.g., prejudice and stereotypes against cultural different others), a mindset in which one's ethnic group is the centre of everything,

and all others are dependent on it. Thus, the higher levels of sensitivity and appreciation of dissimilar cultures might lead to more effective intercultural relations.

Furthermore, Ting-Toomey's (2009) proposed a concept which shares a similar function as intercultural sensitivity. He proposed "mindfulness" as a crucial component in his model of "intercultural conflict competence", which represents being attentive to new behaviours from different cultural perspectives. Ting-Toomey (2009) argued that being mindful of cross-cultural contexts in which conflicts were formed helped to overcome sudden emotional frustration and stress caused by unfamiliar cultural behaviours, thereby improving general intercultural competence. In light of the information, intercultural sensitivity would moderate the severity of identity conflict; on the other hand, high level of identity conflict may hinder development of intercultural sensitivity.

With regard to the relationship between negotiation strategies and intercultural sensitivity, as Kim (2001) suggested, individuals who possessed a bicultural identification might better recognise and deal with cultural similarities and differences. This means as biculturals internalise and engage in two cultures, they might have more motivation to gain a better understanding of similarities and differences between their home and host cultures. Therefore, biculturalism might be related with higher levels of intercultural sensitivity than people adopting assimilation and separation strategy.

Thus, in light of the above information, this study developed the following hypotheses.

Hypothesis 8a: cultural identity conflict will reduce the level of intercultural sensitivity.

Hypothesis 8b: Integration strategy (general, alternation and blending) will predict higher levels of intercultural sensitivity while assimilation and separation will lead to lower levels of intercultural sensitivity.

2.6 Proposed Research Model

Based on the literature review presented in this chapter, the current study argued that the experience and satisfaction of international students is of great significance in helping sustain the internationalisation development of higher education institutions. In order to ensure and enhance international student experience and satisfaction, understanding their adjustment issues in a multicultural context was highlighted to be a demanding task for institutions and the host societies in this study. Particularly, this study focuses on advancing the understanding of attributes and effects of conflicts concerning students' cultural identity. "Identity" was argued to be inherently intertwined with individuals' interactions with the

society. Therefore, cultural identity conflicts were argued to have a great influence on students' values and behaviours, as well as intercultural adaptive outcome which is a prerequisite and also a consequence of a joyful and satisfying experience in an overseas university. In view of that, relevant constructs and their findings were reviewed in this chapter. Based on the discussions, the following conceptual model was proposed in Figure 3 that presented the interested constructs in the current study and their potential relationships.

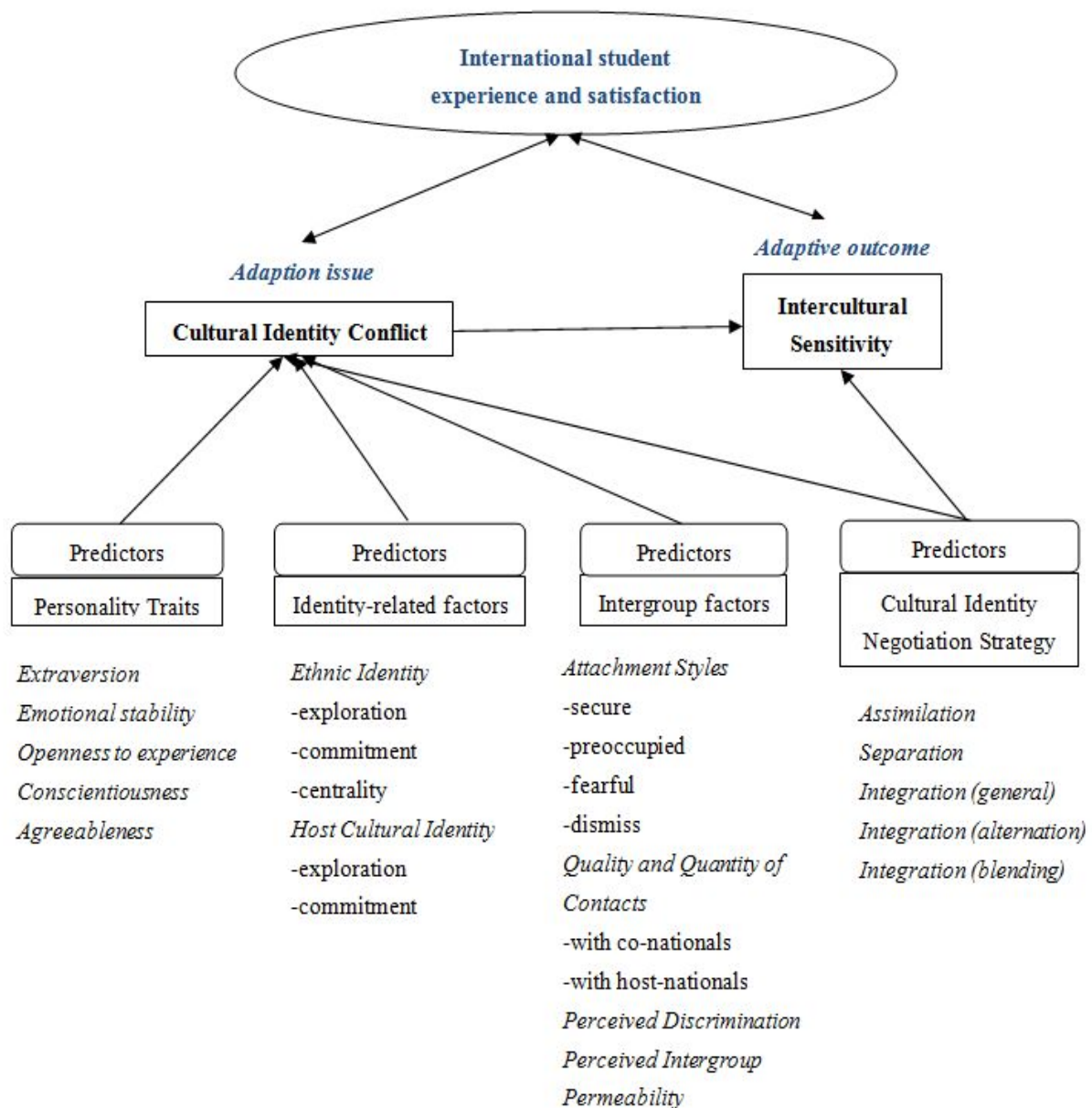


Figure 3 – Proposed research model

The model illustrated two dependent variables, Cultural Identity Conflict and Intercultural Sensitivity. However, Cultural Identity Conflict was also an independent

variable of Intercultural Sensitivity as this study tried to explore adaptive outcomes of experiencing cultural identity conflict. Besides that, other independent variables were hypothesised to have possible relations with Cultural Identity Conflict. These predictors were categorised in four groups: personality traits, identity-related factors, intergroup factors and cultural identity negotiation strategy. The specific hypotheses were developed and presented following the literature review of each construct. The next Methodology chapter will give more information about the logic behind this model, the methods of testing these hypotheses and the instruments and operation for every construct.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Aim and Objectives

The literature reviewed above reveals the significant role of cultural identity in acculturation (Adams & Marshall, 1996; Phinney, 1990). Previous studies also suggest the likelihood for international students to experience identity conflict due to internalisation of both heritage and host cultures (Baumeister, Shapiro & Tice, 1985) and such conflict can be a useful indicator of their cross-cultural adaptation (Ward, Stuart & Kus, 2011). However, as Stuart and Ward (2011) pointed out, acculturation research focusing on intrapersonal issues of ethno-cultural identity conflict is in the early stage, compared with studies on interpersonal issues (e.g., friendship patterns and racial discrimination). The literature, accordingly, revealed a few **gaps** in studies on intrapersonal identity issues that have been paid little attention or not well addressed. The major ones are:

- 1) Relatively few empirical studies on the extent of cultural identity conflict sojourners especially the international student group experience and the scope of correlates of its occurrence is relatively restricted. (Section 2.3.2 & 2.3.3)
- 2) Little understanding of the relationship between levels of identity conflict and strategies of negotiating home- and host- identities (i.e., adopting either one, both or neither). (Section 2.4.1)
- 3) No studies have linked variations on biculturalism to cultural identity conflict, as far as the researcher knows. Berry's (1974, 1984 & 1997) acculturation strategy model proposed four strategies of negotiating heritage and host cultures. However, recent research on biculturalism/integration (the strategy of both maintaining heritage culture and adopting host culture in Berry's model) discovered individual variations of this strategy (i.e., the different ways integrate two cultures). Its relationship with identity conflict has not been tested. (Section 2.4.2)
- 4) A lack of a comprehensive comparison of different cultural identity negotiation strategies (i.e., Berry's model plus biculturalism variations) based on adaptive outcomes. (Section 2.5)

Thus, the central purpose of the current study is trying to address these gaps to some extent so as to improve the understanding of identity issues in cross-cultural transition, the negotiation strategies used by international students when experiencing the conflict and the impact of such conflict and selection of different negotiation strategies on intercultural interactions. The results of this research are hoped to raise the awareness of international

students' challenges on a multicultural campus, and create dialogues in institutions that would be likely to influence strategic decisions of promoting cultural diversity and inclusivity. Specifically, the project will focus on Chinese international students and will carry out a quantitative survey in hope to obtain a general picture of how the Chinese international student group experience and cope with identity conflict. Accordingly, in order to achieve this purpose, this study attempts to fulfill the following objectives:

Objective 1: to find out levels of cultural identity conflict experienced by Chinese international students.

Objective 2: to differentiate the risk and protective factors relating to cultural identity conflict in Chinese international students.

Objective 3: to find out most preferred identity negotiation strategies used by Chinese international students.

Objective 4: to investigate if there are relations between levels of identity conflict and different identity negotiation strategies and the nature of them.

Objective 5: to assess the association between cultural identity conflict, cultural identity negotiation strategies and intercultural sensitivity.

The next section will outline and discuss the specific approach this study used to accomplish these objectives. They are believed to provide a better understanding of Chinese international students' cross-cultural experiences and needs.

3.2 Overview of Research Method

Overall, this study takes a quantitative approach to fulfill two-fold objectives - (1) to provide descriptive data of the severity of identity conflict and most preferred negotiation strategies among Chinese international students, and (2) to explore the empirical relationships between constructs identified to have potential links in the literature (i.e., factors influencing cultural identity conflict, the relationship between identity conflict and negotiation strategies, and the link between intercultural sensitivity, identity conflict and negotiation strategies). Specifically, a survey design was employed to serve the objectives and it allowed the researcher to measure and to compare two samples of Chinese international students who attend universities in Australia and New Zealand respectively.

A quantitative survey was adopted to conduct this research is mainly due to the status of understanding of the problems and the aim of addressing the literature gaps. The literature contended that the issues of cultural identity conflict have not been well studied (Stuart & Ward, 2011; Ward, Stuart & Kus, 2011). That indicates choosing a quantitative survey that is

generally viewed to “help assess the prevalence and severity of a problem” (Ozanne & Fischer, 2012. p. 101) is appropriate for the current study. Moreover, because Chinese international students as a collective group is who the researcher wants to understand, using the survey method can ensure a larger sample size compared with qualitative approaches such as interviews and ethnography, and is more likely to achieve good representation of target population and generalisation of results. Additionally, with regard to variations in integration processes, as the literature review argues, while some qualitative studies (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; Toomey, Dorjee & Ting-Toomey, 2013; Ward, 2013) have provided empirical evidence of blending and alternating strategies in individuals’ real experiences, specific instruments of measuring these two subtypes of integration are lacked. The measures were suggested to be developed in order to classify and differentiate processes of achieving integration, and test the potential relationships between these strategies and other acculturation concepts (Celenk & van de Vijver, 2014; Ward, 2013). Therefore, this study has tried to develop scales for alternation and blending strategies which have been validated in empirical qualitative studies so that, together with Berry’s four-fold acculturation model, the connections between identity negotiation strategies, cultural identity conflict, intercultural sensitivity can be assessed.

3.3 Sampling

Chinese international students attending universities in New Zealand and Australia have been chosen as the population of this study. This decision is appropriate is first because of the significance of Chinese market for education export sector in New Zealand and Australia. The data shows China is the largest source of international students for all sectors in New Zealand (Education NZ, 2014b), and till 2014, Chinese students comprise 26.5% of the total international student population in New Zealand (Education NZ, 2014a); in Australia in 2014, the biggest number of enrolment in the higher education sector were from China, and all the Chinese students account for 36.1% of total international students (Australia Department of Education and Training, 2015b). Second, previous cultural research has shown that Chinese students are very likely to be caught in a deep dilemma of vacillating between Chinese culture and host cultures due to cultural distance (Yan & Berliner, 2011). This creates the challenge of maintaining a coherent sense of self for them. Moreover, according to a national survey of international students in 2007, Chinese students in New Zealand gave the least favourable evaluations of their study programmes across all items, felt the least culturally included and were significantly less satisfied with life in New Zealand than students from

other Asian countries (NZ Ministry of Education, 2008). It shows it is of big concern to create a better understanding of Chinese international students in order to improve their satisfaction with their overseas experience. Choosing New Zealand and Australia as the sample sociocultural settings is in order to generate implications for both countries and institutions based on a comparison; and it is believed that these two countries are comparable because they are geographically adjacent and are both commonwealth countries so that they share similar education styles and cultures to a high extent.

Accordingly, this study aims to negotiate access from one Australia's university and one New Zealand's university to send online surveys to their current Chinese international students. This was undertaken by contacting universities' International Office who has the authority to send emails to international students and the database of all Chinese international students' email addresses. Through negotiation conducted by the supervisor, the access to University of Canterbury (UC) in New Zealand and University of Adelaide (UA) in Australia has been obtained. This means 530 Chinese students in University of Canterbury and 2501 Chinese students in University of Adelaide are accessible for the researcher. Because demographics of the population are homogeneous and clear (i.e., Chinese international students who currently study in Australia and New Zealand universities), the current study decided to distribute surveys to all the Chinese international students in the sampling frame instead of employing a probability sampling technique which randomly draws a sample from the sample frame. Another reason for this is the disadvantaged timing of distribution which was during the summer break for both universities (December and January); low response rate was expected. Hence, reaching as many participants as possible would offset the disadvantage of the timing.

In terms of the sample size, central limit theory suggests a minimum of 30 participants is needed to obtain normally distributed data for hypothesis testing. Given the survey takes around 30 minutes, the number of incomplete responses might be high. Therefore, the current research aims to have at least 50 respondents from University of Canterbury and 100 respondents from University of Adelaide.

Another issue with the sampling is the definition of "Chinese" international students. In this study, the meaning of Chinese students is based on the nationality instead of ethnicity in order to avoid too many noises which might occur due to cultural difference within the Chinese ethnic group. This means student groups such as Malaysian Chinese and Singaporean Chinese are excluded from this study and this project will focus on Chinese students from People's Republic of China (PRC). Interestingly, according to the universities'

database, Taiwanese students who are not accounted as Chinese students from the nationality perspective are also included in the email lists of students from PRC the researcher requested from the International Office. Despite that, responses by Taiwanese students were included in this analysis given the very similar cultures and customs between China and Taiwan. Taiwanese students are identified through the question asking students' residing provinces in China which will be discussed in more details in the Demographics section.

3.4 Procedure

The survey was presented to participants in English instead of Chinese because the researcher assumes Chinese students who enter both universities should have obtained adequate scores in IELTS which allow them to understand the questions. Moreover, due to time constraint, it was not available for this research to contact bilingual experts to translate the questions into Chinese so that original meanings can be accurately retained. Instead, in order to assure that most of Chinese students can understand and interpret the questions correctly, three Chinese students from University of Canterbury were invited to read and answer all the questions before sending out the survey. They reported few problems with understanding most of questions except the Big-Five personality scale which contains some difficult adjectives for describing characteristics. Accordingly, a Chinese translation done by the researcher for the personality trait scale was included along with the original English scale.

The survey questions were mostly measured using in a 5-point Likert scale with a few multiple choices and open demographics questions (see Appendix 2 for the survey questions). It takes respondents approximately 30 minutes to fill in. There is an opportunity in the end to win either one of twenty five \$20 Westfield gift vouchers or one of two iPod Touches for students from University of Canterbury and to win one iPod Touch for students from University of Adelaide.

An invitation email which includes a survey link has been prepared by the researcher and supervisor to send to International Office in both universities (see Appendix 3 for the invite email). The International Office then forwarded this email to Chinese students from PRC in their institutions. The survey was open from mid-December, 2014 till mid-January, 2015. As it was during summer break, a reminder email (see Appendix 4) was sent out halfway to remind and encourage students who had not filled out the survey.

3.5 Measures

The research survey consisted of four self-reported sections regarding (1) demographic information, (2) cultural identity conflict, (3) predictors of cultural identity conflict and (4) intercultural sensitivity. These materials are utilised for undertaking three main statistical analyses so as to test the hypothesised relationships between the constructs that were proposed in Chapter 2. The first analysis examined how a range of factors exert significant influences on the level of cultural identity conflict; that are personality differences, strength of ethnic and host cultural identities, intergroup relations and preference of cultural identity conflict negotiation. Following that, the effects of choosing different strategies as the predominant approach to negotiate with cultural identities were then compared. Last, this research investigated if levels of identity conflict and preference of different negotiation strategies would impact participants' intercultural competence which will be measured using the intercultural sensitivity scale. An overview of the used instruments and the analysis structure is presented in Table 4. The detailed information about each instrument is outlined in this section below.

Most scales used an aggregated format through which items were summed to yield an overall score and the sums were then averaged by the number of total items so as to make the comparison and analysis easier. In order to reduce the confusion caused by changing the number of scale items in different instruments and to keep consistency, most of the instruments were measured by using a 5-item Likert scale, mostly ranging from “strongly disagree” (1), “disagree” (2), “neither agree nor disagree” (3), “agree” (4) and “strongly agree” (5).

Table 4 – Overview of instruments and their related analyses

Type	Name	Source
Analysis 1: Predicting cultural identity conflict		
Dependent Variable	Cultural Identity Conflict	Ethno-Cultural Identity Conflict Scale (Ward, Stuart & Kus, 2011)
Independent Variables	Predictors:	
	Big-five Personality Traits	Ten-Item Personality Inventory (Gosling, Rentfrow & Swann Jr., 2003)
	Ethnic Identity	Exploration and Commitment (Phinney & Ong, 2007), Centrality (Cameron, 2004)
	Host cultural identity	Exploration and Commitment (Phinney & Ong, 2007)
	Attachment Styles	Attachment Styles Questionnaire (Hofstra, van Oudenhoven & Bunnk, 2005)
	Quality of contacts with co-nationals and host-nationals	Adapted from Lin (2008)
	Quantity of contacts with co-nationals and host-nationals	Adapted from Leong & Ward (2008) and Ward & Rana-Deuba (2000)
	Perceived Discrimination	Adopted from Finch, Kolody & Vega (2000) and Hocoy (1994)
	Perceived Permeability of Intergroup Boundaries	Adopted from Terry, Pelly, Lalonde & Smith (2006)
	Assimilation Strategy	Assimilation, separation and integration were developed by the researcher based on Berry, Kim, Young & Bujaki ‘s (1989) direct approach of measuring fourfold acculturation strategies
	Separation Strategy	
	Integration Strategy (general)	Alternation and blending were developed by the researcher based on Phinney & Devich-Navarro’s (1997) qualitative results and operationalised using Berry et al.’s (1989) four-statement approach
	Integration Strategy (alternation)	
	Integration Strategy (blending)	
Analysis 2: Investigating relationship between predominant cultural identity negotiation strategy and cultural identity conflict		
Dependent Variable	Cultural Identity Conflict	See above (Analysis 1)
Grouping Variable	Predominant Cultural Identity Negotiation Strategy	A variable created in which each participant was categorised into one strategy group on which he/she reported the highest score
Analysis 3: Investigating the impact of cultural identity conflict and cultural identity negotiation strategy on international sensitivity		
Dependent Variable	Intercultural Sensitivity	Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS) by Chen & Starosta’s (2000)
Independent Variable	Cultural Identity Conflict	See above (Analysis 1)
	Cultural Identity Negotiation Strategies (Assimilation, Separation, Integration (general, alternation and blending)	See above (Analysis 1)

3.5.1 *Dependent Variables*

Cultural Identity Conflict

The Ethno-Cultural Identity Conflict Scale (EICS) developed by Ward, Stuart and Kus (2011) was used to assess participants' intrapersonal conflict resulted from attempts of managing more than one cultural identity. This scale includes 20 items focusing on subjective feelings (e.g., feeling of confusion), cognitive processes (e.g., self-perceptions and analyses) and sample contexts of conflicts (e.g., families, peers and wider society) that were thought to be prototypical of a conflicted individual. The scale displayed sound reliability and validity in Ward, Stuart and Kus's (2011) study. The Cronbach alphas scores were high, ranging from 0.89 to 0.92 in different samples, showing the high reliability of the scale. It also exhibited good convergent validity; higher EIC was strongly associated with less self-concept clarity, lower levels of sense of coherence, and greater sense of identity distress. Participants were asked to rate how much they agree with the statements in terms of how they see themselves since they arrived in New Zealand or Australia. Higher scores indicate a greater sense of cultural identity conflict experienced by the individual.

Intercultural Sensitivity

Chen and Starosta's (2000) 24-item Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS) was employed to measure how much desire and motivation an individual has to accept, appreciate and understand cultural differences. Although intercultural sensitivity deals with the affective dimension of intercultural contacts, IS was found to be positively related to intercultural effectiveness (the behavioural aspect), suggesting positive emotions towards different cultures and greater sensitivity to differentiate and understand other cultures promote effective intercultural behaviours (Chen & Starosta, 2000). The alpha score reported by Chen and Starosta (2000) was 0.88 which reflects good reliability of the scale. The scale revealed five factors in the initial exploratory factor analysis conducted by Chen and Starosta (2000), including Interaction Engagement (6 items), Respect for Cultural Differences (6 items), Interaction Confidence (5 items), Interaction Enjoyment (3 items) and Interaction Attentiveness (3 items). This scale was further validated by using a confirmatory factor analysis in a German sample (Fritz, Mollenberg & Chen, 2001). These findings confirmed the overall structure and factors of this scale although relatively low discrimination was found between two factors (interaction enjoyment and attentiveness). Higher scores indicate higher levels of intercultural sensitivity.

3.5.2 Independent Variables

Predictors of Cultural Identity Conflict

Big-five Personality Traits

Given the long length of some widely-used instruments measuring the Big-five personality dimensions (e.g., the 44-item Big Five Inventory by John, Donahue & Kentle, 1991 and the 60-item NEO Five-Factor Inventory by Costa & McCrae, 1992), this study used a more manageable and time-saving scale, the Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI) developed by Gosling, Rentfrow and Swann Jr (2003). Each item of TIPI consists of two trait adjectives, separated by a comma and one personality dimension is comprised with two items. Participants were asked to indicate the extent of agreement or disagreement with the items by using the common stem, “I see myself as:”. Because only two items in each subscale, TIPI suffered with low internal consistency, shown by low Cronbach alphas scores which were 0.68, 0.40, 0.50, 0.73, and 0.45 for the Extroversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Openness to Experience subscales respectively (Gosling, Rentfrow & Swann Jr, 2003). For the sake of controlling the length of the survey in order to attract more respondents, this study still used TIPI. However, instead of combining two items (i.e., four trait descriptive adjectives) to represent one personality dimension, this research operated and analysed the 10 items independently, each of them representing some human traits or characteristics. The internal consistency analysis will be used to examine the reliability of the scale further in the Results chapter.

Ethnic Identity Strength

Based on the information in the literature review, four dimensions of cultural identity were shown to be effective in measuring cultural/ethnic identity, which are self-categorisation, exploration, commitment and centrality. As Chinese international students have already claimed their ethnic self-categorisation in their university documents, self-categorisation was not asked again in this measure. The Exploration and Commitment subscales of Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure-Revised (MEIM-R) constructed by Phinney and Ong (2007) were utilised to assess “the efforts to learn more about one’s group and participation in ethnic cultural practices” and “a positive affirmation one’s group” (p. 275) respectively. Both subscales had acceptable Cronbach’s alphas (0.76 and 0.78 respectively). In terms of importance/centrality of ethnic identity to participants, Centrality subscale from Cameron’s (2004) Three Factor Model of Social Identity was used. The current study only used four

items which showed a factor loading score of over .50 out of the original seven items. The internal consistency was examined further and presented in the next chapter.

Host Cultural Identity Strength

Paralleling to the measurement of ethnic identity, the Exploration and Commitment subscales of MEIM-R developed by Phinney and Ong (2007) were also used to measure participants' positive bonds with the wider host society. The Centrality subscale (Cameron, 2004) which assesses the frequency of thinking about one's group membership was thought to be not applicable to host cultural identity because for sojourners, the sense of being a member of host societies is much weaker than their sense of ethnic membership.

Attachment Styles

The Attachment Styles Questionnaire (24 items) measures the way individuals relate to close others (Hofstra, van Oudenhoven & Bunnk, 2005). It consists of four subscales, which are the Secure style (8 items), the Fearful style (4 items), the Dismissive style (5 items) and the Preoccupied style (7 items). According to the original study (Hofstra, van Oudenhoven & Bunnk, 2005), the scale was operated by calculating average scores on all four attachment scales and participants would not be classified into one attachment style but can be prone to more than one style if scoring high on them. Hofstra, van Oudenhoven and Bunnk (2005) reported desirable Cronbach's alphas for Secure, Fearful and Preoccupied attachment (0.78, 0.81, 0.83 respectively), and a relatively low alpha for Dismissive attachment (0.66). The current study calculated Cronbach's alphas for four styles and the results will be presented in the next chapter.

Quality of Contacts with Co-nationals and Host-nationals

The quality of contacts measured how satisfied participants were with their relations with co-nationals (other Chinese) and host-nationals (New Zealanders or Australians). This was assessed by using Lin's (2008) 6-item instrument which depicts six conditions of contacts and is rated on a bipolar scale with two opposite descriptors on two ends, including: involuntary - voluntary, superficial - intimate, unpleasant - pleasant, equal status - unequal status (R), cooperative - competitive (R) and accepting - rejecting (R). One extra condition was added into the current research which is active - passive (R). It will help to capture how engaging and active participants are in activities with co-nationals and host-nationals respectively.

Quantity of Contacts with Co-nationals and Host-nationals

This research adopted Leong and Ward's (2008) and Ward and Rana-Deuba's (2000) measurement whereby participants were asked to rate how often they participated in various social and academic activities with co-nationals and host-nationals respectively. As the original scales did not reveal the specific items, the researcher included eleven activities thought to be typical for university students (e.g., discussing academic issues, playing sports, traveling, going to social events, and sharing personal problems). The scale was measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "never" (1), "once or twice a semester" (2), "once or twice a month" (3), "once or twice a week" (4), "more than twice a week" (5). A higher score indicates more frequent contacts with co-nationals or host nationals.

Perceived Discrimination in Daily Life

Finch, Kolody and Vega's (2000) 3-item scale ($\alpha = 0.76$) was used to measure participants' perceptions of receiving unfair or negative treatment because of their Chinese background. One extra item from Hocoy's (1994, cited in Lin, 2008) perceived racism scale was added into the current study, which is "how often do New Zealanders/Australians make you feel inferior?" because this item helps to understand participants' subjective feelings of being discriminated which is not captured in Finch, Kolody and Vega's (2000) scale. Participants were asked to indicate their frequency of experiencing the situations described in the four questions by rating on a 5-point Likert Scale (1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, 5 = always).

Perceived Permeability of Intergroup Boundaries

Terry, Pelly, Lalonde and Smith's (2006) scale was employed to measure participants' perceived levels of openness of boundaries between their ethnic groups and host-culture groups, in other words, how open participants think host nationals are to include and accept them. The scale includes two items assessing participants' perceived access to social and academic-related activities engaged by native students and two other items assessing their perceived access to resources and opportunities compared with domestic students. Examples of question include: "how easy would it be for you to become involved in social activities with New Zealand/Australian students? (e.g., social events, clubs, parties and hanging out)", which was measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "very hard" (1) to "very easy" (5); and "compared with New Zealand/Australian students, how much access do you think Chinese students have to the university resources? (e.g., learning skills resources, help from

professors)", which contains three options to choose from ("New Zealand/Australian Students have more", "very much the same" and "Chinese students have more"). Four items will be assessed separately.

Cultural Identity Negotiation Strategy

There are various approaches of operating and measuring strategies of negotiating cultural identities; the most widely used approaches might be two-statement scales and four-statement scales, according to reviews on acculturation strategy assessment (Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2006; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2007). In terms of two-statement scales, respondents' cultural orientations are usually measured in two separate scales, one representing the orientation to home cultures and the other representing the orientation to host cultures (e.g., Phinney, 1992; Ward & Kennedy, 1994). This method often uses a median-split technique to investigate Berry's four acculturation strategies: integrated individuals are identified as those who score above the median on both orientations, assimilated individuals are those who score over the median on orientation to host cultures but not to home cultures, separated individuals are those who have scores over the median on ethnic orientation instead of host-culture orientation and marginalised are those whose scores are under the median of both orientations. By using the four-statement approach, on the other hand, Berry's four acculturation strategies are directly and independently assessed in four separate subscales, and the subscale that receives the highest score represents the most preferred strategy by the respondent (Berry et al., 1989).

Both approaches have their own benefits and disadvantages. The two-statement approach has the benefits of more simplicity, more clarity of interpretation by participants and higher time-efficiency compared with the four-statement approach. However, it is important to note that besides measuring strategies constructed in Berry's acculturation model, this research attempts to design instruments for two subtypes of integration (i.e., blending and alternation) which have not been developed before. Therefore, it is crucial to choose an approach whereby blending and alternation strategies can also be operationalised in order to maintain a consistent measurement structure for all cultural identity negotiation strategies. The four-statement method is proposed to be more appropriate in the current research, because it allows construction of statements that capture the complexity of switching and blending two cultures which cannot be achieved in the two-statement method. Details of five subscales (i.e., assimilation, separation, integration (general), integration (blending) and integration (alternation)) will be presented in the following sections.

Assimilation, Separation, Integration (general)

The four-statement method was applied to the current study based on Berry et al.'s (1989) proposed measurement in which a set of four statements representing four strategies was formed with regard to one acculturation issue. Participants were required to rate the extent to which they agree with each statement. The scores for all the statements representing one strategy were added and averaged for the comparison between all the strategies. Higher average scores indicate higher preference of the strategy. The acculturation issues are dependent on the cultural contexts and are suggested to be of great concerns to the ethnic minority groups (Berry et al., 1989). Accordingly, nine acculturation challenges in five categories were identified to be salient to Chinese international students based on a range of findings in cross-cultural adjustment difficulties of Chinese international students (e.g., Lin, 2008; NZ Ministry of Education, 2008; Yan & Berliner, 2011; Zhang & Goodson, 2011), including: language use and preference - "language preference in interpersonal communication" and "language preference in media"; social affiliation - "friendship patterns" and "participation in social activities"; daily living habits - "food" and "fashion"; cultural traditions/customs - "practices of cultural festival celebration" and "acceptance of cultural values, attitudes, ideas and behaviours"; cultural pride - "pride in two cultures".

Integration (alternation), Integration (blending)

The format of alternation and blending subscales of integration is the same as other three subscales discussed in the previous section. The statements representing alternation and blending strategies were developed by the researcher with reference to Phinney and Devich-Navarro's (1997) and Ward's (2013) description and differentiation of these two strategies drawn on participants' narratives of their identity negotiation experiences. Their analyses revealed that blending individuals were characterised to express positive attitudes about ethnic and host cultures and not to perceive two cultures as strongly conflicted, differentiated or separate, whereas alternating individuals, although orienting to both cultures, tended to see distinction and conflict between them, so that they felt the need to choose either one and to switch their behaviours depending on priming cultural cues in certain contexts. In light of this information, statements with regards to the blending strategy in this study try to capture that people's behaviours are not influenced by the cultural contexts; on the other hand, the alternation strategy try to describe how people behave or feel differently according to host- and home-culture cues. Two examples of statements concerning participation in social activities are: "I like being involved in social events with both Chinese and New Zealanders,

but I prefer them to be separate events (alternation)” and “I like being involved in social events with both Chinese and New Zealanders, and enjoy the mix of cultures (blending).

Predominant Cultural Identity Negotiation Strategy

This is a categorical variable created by classifying participants into five negotiation strategy groups based on the highest score received on a certain strategy scale. Assimilation was coded as group “1”, separation as group “2”, Integration (general) as group “3”, Integration (alternation) as group “4” and Integration (blending) as group “5”. By being categorised into one strategy group, it indicates that the strategy was the most preferred and predominant strategy the participant intended to use. This variable was used to identify which strategy Chinese students favoured the most. Furthermore, this study aims to evaluate if choosing a certain identity negotiation strategy as a dominant strategy exerts greater influence on identity conflict than other strategies.

Demographics

Basic Demographic Information

Basic demographic information including age, gender, employment status and the province of residence in China were proposed to be likely to account for some variance of cultural identity conflict experienced by participants. Participants were asked to enter their age by year in a text bar in the survey and to indicate their gender by choosing either “male” or “female”.

They were also required to state which province in China they were from. The answers of provinces were then classified into five categories (four mainland regions including Eastern Coastal Region, Central Region, Western Region, North-eastern Region plus the Special Administered Region (i.e., Hong Kong and Macaw) and Taiwan) according to the categorisation of economic regions generally used by National Bureau of Statistics of China (2011). Students from Taiwan are classified in the same category with Hong Kong and Macaw because these three areas are rooted in the same Chinese culture as mainland Chinese but their cultures are to some extent distinct from mainland China because of their unique histories (e.g., colonial history and political division). East of China is widely considered the most modernised and developed area while Western area’s economic development was most lagged behind, with the Central and Northeastern regions being in the middle. Moreover, given Hong Kong and Macaw were both colonised by Western developed countries, their societies contain multiple cultural elements and their economic development is relatively

more advanced than mainland China. Therefore, the level of economic development of participants' residing areas in China may provide some information on how participants encounter unfamiliar culturally different environment.

Residency information

Residency information consist of participants' accommodation choices in New Zealand/Australia, length of actual residence in New Zealand/Australia, and length of planned stay in New Zealand/Australia. Participants were asked to indicate their accommodation styles by choosing from “living with family member”, “in a university hall”, “in a homestay” and “in a flat”. The accommodation choice was then converted into three dummy variables to use in the regression analysis, with the category “living with the family” as the baseline group. It is assumed that the accommodation variable may relate to participants' interaction with co-nationals and host-nationals. For example, students who live in a university hall may have higher chance to socialise with students from other cultures living in the same hall.

Length of actual residence measures how long participants have resided in the host countries by asking participating to enter the time. All responses were converted into “years” to two decimal places. It is proposed that length of residence may be a significant predictor of cultural identity conflict because previous studies have shown that upon entry to host countries, sojourners often experience the most social difficulty but will gradually become more socially adapt to the new culture throughout their stay and cultural learning process (Ward & Kennedy, 1996). International students' intended length of stay in the future is also likely to influence the sense of cultural identity conflict. For Students who plan to remain in New Zealand or Australia for long time after graduation or plan to apply for permanent residence in the future, their willingness and efforts of engaging into host societies might be greater than those who intend to go back to China once finishing study. This was also measured by asking participants to enter the time they plan to stay in New Zealand and Australia. The answers were then recoded into three categories: 1 – intention to stay permanently (planning to stay for 10 years and above), 0 – no intention to stay permanently (planning to stay for less than 10 years), and 9 (as missing value) – not sure.

Previous Intercultural Experiences and Training

Two forms of previous intercultural experiences were examined: previous experience of overseas holidays and overseas short-term residence (more than 3 months). Both forms of intercultural experiences were measured using a Yes or No question. It is assumed that

participants who have previously experienced culturally different lifestyles and interacted with people from different cultures might exhibit better cross-cultural adjustment skills, thus negatively relating to cultural identity conflict.

Previous cross-cultural training was measured by asking participants to choose Yes or No to the question if they have been involved in cross-cultural training in any form (e.g., a cross-cultural course, volunteering or social work concerning foreigners). Such training was proposed to be positively related to intercultural sensitivity and potentially associated with lower sense of cultural identity conflict.

English Skills

It has been broadly revealed in the field of international student adjustment research that language barrier is one of the major difficulties international students might encounter in the host countries (e.g., Lee, 2010). Hence, host language (English) competency was proposed to be associated with Chinese students' communicative experiences, thereby possibly influencing the forming or reconstructing of their orientation towards home and host-identity. English skill was measured by one item which asked participants to rate their overall English skills on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "Poor" (1) to "Excellent" (5).

3.6 Data Analysis

When the data collection stage was finished, all responses have been checked in terms of the missing values and the variable ranges. Incomplete responses with extensive missing values were eliminated from the dataset while those with odd missing values within some multi-item scales were retained after replacing the missing values by the mean of other items completed in the scale.

After data cleaning, the demographic information of the samples was presented to provide background information of respondents. Reliability of instruments was then checked to ensure all the scales are reliable and valid to use. After that, assumption tests were undertaken to detect outliers and to assess normality of the tested variables. Multicollinearity between multiple predictors of cultural identity conflict was tested when the multiple regression was undertaken and the results will be presented along with the regression results. The test of homogeneity of variance was conducted and shown together with the ANOVA results.

Following that, several categorical variables measuring demographics were converted into dummy variables for the regression analyses. A series of statistical analyses were then carried out to examine the three main analyses outlined in Table 4 by testing the hypotheses

and research questions listed in the Literature Review. Specifically, in Analysis 1, a series of initial regression analyses were first used to reveal the significant predictors which were later entered into a multiple regression analysis to show the total fit of the predictive model and the relative importance of the predictors. In Analysis 2, a one-way ANOVA was performed to compare the difference of levels of cultural identity conflict among groups of individuals choosing a certain identity negotiation strategy as their predominant strategy. In Analysis 3, the relationship between intercultural sensitivity and cultural identity conflict was assessed by a linear regression; individuals' ratings on five negotiation strategies were also entered into a regression test as independent variables to test their relationships with intercultural sensitivity. Last, a comparison of cultural identity conflict level, predominant identity negotiation strategies and intercultural sensitivity level between the New Zealand and Australian samples was undertaken by several independent t-tests. This is to provide additional insights into the difference in adaptive issues and outcomes between these two samples. The results will be reported and discussed in details in the Results chapter.

Chapter 4 Results

4.1 Data Cleaning

A total of 427 Chinese international students participated in this study (268 students are from UA in Australia, 159 students are from UC in New Zealand). The overall response rate is 14.1%, with the response rates being 10.7% and 30% for the Australian and New Zealand samples, respectively. The response rates are relatively low which may be mainly due to the long length of the survey (estimated completion time was 30 minutes) and the disadvantaged collection timing around the summer break. Of all the 427 responses, only 255 (155 from UA and 105 from UC) are valid for analyses after removing incomplete responses that contain big chunks of missing values.

Responses with odd missing values that seem legitimate were retained in the dataset considering the relatively small amount of usable responses received for the current study. Missing values on certain variables can be attributed to legitimate or illegitimate reasons (Osborne, 2013). Legitimate missing values are those that are appropriate for respondents to skip (Osborne, 2013), due to reasons such as privacy or sensitivity; for example, participants were able to choose not to answer questions about their gender, age or certain questions with regards to their cultural identities that were too sensitive to them. On the other hand, illegitimate missing values may occur when participants choose to skip loads of questions they were expected to answer or to drop out of the survey, leaving great pieces of missing data (Osborne, 2013).

In order to make those responses with odd missing data available for the analyses, missing values on multi-item variables were substituted with the mean of other items in the same scale. This mean substitution solution to odd missing values was justified by Osborne (2013) as an effective and defensible practice in the case where a scale uses multiple, highly correlated questions to assess a single construct and there is only one dimension (factor) in the scale. In this way, four missing values on the Cultural Identity Conflict scale (one missing value in one response) were replaced with the mean of other items because the scale contained 20 items, displayed high internal correlation (a Cronbach's alpha of 0.89) and showed no clear dimensions through the factor analysis.

4.2 Sample Structure

4.2.1 Basic Demographics

Sample characteristics are presented in Table 5. 129 (50.6%) of the usable responses are from males and 122 (47.8%) of them are from females (missing $n=4$, 1.6%). The gender balance was also shown in New Zealand and Australian samples, both comprising of slightly more males. Overall, the majority of participants (47.4%) were aged between 23 and 27. Considering most university degrees in Oceania requires 3 years full time to accomplish and the majority of Chinese students normally finish high schools at 18 or 19, it was assumed that the largest group of participants are postgraduates. Specifically, over half of participants in the Australian sample (61.3%) were postgraduates whereas the majority of participants (39%) were undergraduates (aged between 18 and 22) in the New Zealand sample.

In terms of participants' residence regions in China, most of Chinese international students (55.7%) in the two institutions were from the most economically developed area in China, the Eastern Coastal area. Following that, 14.9% of overall samples were from the Central region, 14.1% of them came from the Western region, 7.1% of them were from the Northeastern region, and only 7 respondents were from Hong Kong and Taiwan. Of the remaining 14 participants who were labelled "not answered" for this question, 5 of them did not answer the question. The other 9 answers were not able to be distinguished because their answers can suggest either one province in the Western region or one in the Central region, which are spelled the same in English. To avoid making wrong speculation which may distort the results, those 9 answers were treated problematic and labeled as missing values.

The samples consisted of 111 students (43.5%) working part-time and 140 students (54.9%) not working (missing $n=4$, 1.6%). This distribution is in line with two separate samples, with part-time working participants slightly less than those who do not have any jobs.

4.2.2 Residence Information in the Host Countries

Of both New Zealand and Australian samples, the absolute majority of participants (61%, 78.8%, respectively) live in rental accommodation. In total, Chinese international students less frequently stay with their family members (11.4%), in homestays (9.8%) or in university residence (7.5%).

Overall, 68.2 percent of surveyed students have been living in New Zealand and Australia for one to five years. Students residing in the host countries for one to five years are also the largest group in two separate samples. The second largest groups (22%) in both

samples are students living in the host countries for less than one year. Much less students (9.8%) have lived in both countries for more than 6 years. Compared with the Australian samples that do not have any student residing in Australia for more than 10 years, 11.4 % (n=12) of students in the New Zealand sample have lived in New Zealand for over 10 years. With regard to future plans, the overall majority (80%) of Chinese students do not intend to stay in New Zealand or Australia in the long run (more than 10 years) or permanently, with 3.9% of them being not sure yet. Interestingly, within the samples who indicated intention for long-term and permanent stay in the host countries, the number of students studying in New Zealand (n=30) was considerably higher than the number of those studying in Australia (n=11).

4.2.3 Previous Intercultural Experiences

Overall, slightly more than half of students (52.2%) reported that they had holidays in other foreign countries besides host countries. However, when it comes to short-term stay (more than 3 months) in other overseas countries, only 38 (14.9%) of them reported such experience. This suggests most of students have not had experiences of overseas study exchange or internship which normally involves over 3 months of cross-cultural contacts. Despite that, nearly half of participants (45.1%) indicated they have involved in cross-cultural training such as a cross-cultural course, volunteering or social work concerning foreigners.

4.2.4 English skills

Overall, participants self-reported a moderate level of English proficiency (M=3.00 on a 5-point Likert scale, SD=.85). Specifically, Chinese students studying in New Zealand (M=3.11, SD=.91) indicated a slightly higher level of English skills than those studying in Australia (M=2.93, SD=.80).

Table 5 – Sample characteristics

Characteristic	Overall		New Zealand		Australia	
Number of participants	255	100%	105	41.1%	150	58.9%
Gender						
Male	129	50.6%	53	50.5%	76	50.7%
Female	122	47.8%	48	45.7%	74	49.3%
Not answered	4	1.6%	4	3.8%	-	-
Age						
18 – 22	87	34.1%	41	39.0%	46	30.7%
23 – 27	121	47.4%	29	27.6%	92	61.3%
28 – 32	28	11.0%	20	19.0%	8	5.3%
33 – 37	10	3.9%	7	6.7%	3	2.0%
38 – 42	4	1.6%	3	2.9%	1	0.7%
Above 42	1	0.4%	1	1.0%	-	-
Not answered	4	1.6%	4	3.8%	-	-
Residing area in China						
Eastern coastal region	142	55.7%	60	57.1%	82	54.7%
Central region	38	14.9%	14	13.3%	24	16.0%
Western region	36	14.1%	11	10.5%	25	16.7%
Northeastern region	18	7.1%	6	5.7%	12	8.0%
Hong Kong, Macaw and Taiwan	7	2.7%	6	5.7%	1	0.7%
Not answered	14	5.5%	8	7.7%	6	3.9%
Employment status						
Part-time	111	43.5%	49	46.7%	62	41.3%
Not working	140	54.9%	52	49.5%	88	58.7%
Not answered	4	1.6%	4	3.8%	-	-
Accommodation styles						
With family	29	11.4%	19	18.1%	10	6.7%
University residence	19	7.5%	12	11.4%	7	4.7%
Rental flat	182	71.4%	64	61.0%	118	78.8%
Homestay	25	9.8%	10	9.5%	15	10.0%
Length of Residence in the host country						
Less than 1 year	56	22.0%	16	15.2%	40	26.7%
1 – 5 year	174	68.2%	67	63.8%	107	71.3%
6 – 10 years	13	5.1%	10	9.5%	3	2.0%
More than 10 years	12	4.7%	12	11.4%	-	-
Intention to stay permanently						
Yes	41	16.1%	30	28.6%	11	7.3%
No	204	80.0%	71	67.6%	133	88.7%
Not sure	10	3.9%	4	3.8%	6	4.0%
Holidays in other foreign countries						
Yes	133	52.2%	63	60.0%	70	46.7%
No	122	47.8%	42	40.0%	80	53.3%
Short-term (> 3 months) stay in other foreign countries						
Yes	38	14.9%	22	21.0%	16	10.7%
No	217	85.1%	83	79.0%	134	89.3%
Previous cross-cultural training						
Yes	115	45.1%	43	41.0%	72	48.0%
No	140	54.9%	62	59.0%	78	52.0%
Self-reported English skill						
Mean	3.00		3.11		2.93	
Standard deviation	.85		.91		.80	
Not answered	2		0		2	

4.3 Scale Reliability of Multi-Item Variables

Scale reliability represents the degree to which a scale produces consistent results if repeated measurements are made in different situations (Field, 2013). In order to effectively capture the constructs that this research wanted to examine, many multi-item variables were used to tap different aspects of each construct. Therefore, it is necessary to first ensure a desirable internal consistency between multiple items of one scale, which means individual items would produce results consistent with the overall scale. The most widely used measure of internal consistency is Cronbach's (1951) alpha ranging from 0 (no internal consistency) to 1 (perfect internal consistency). A higher score for Cronbach's alpha is a sign of higher interconnectedness between items within a scale, suggesting higher reliability. Normally, 0.7 is an acceptable value for Cronbach's alpha in social science due to the diversity of the constructs being measured (Kline, 2013). To minimise acquiescent bias in responses, namely the case in which participants tend to agree all the questions to indicate a positive and desirable response (Holbrook, 2008), some questions are negatively worded so that a strong agreement with the question indicates undesirable behaviours. Before reliability tests were conducted, items that were negatively coded were reverse coded back so that all the items were coded in the same direction. Table 6 reports initial Cronbach's alpha scores and final scores after modifying certain items.

Table 6 – Cronbach's alpha for multi-item variables

Variable	Initial Alpha	Final Alpha	Solution
Dependent Variables			
Cultural Identity Conflict	0.881	0.881	
Intercultural Sensitivity	0.871	0.871	
Independent Variables			
Extroversion (Big Five personality)	0.541	-	10 items were used independently
Agreeableness (Big Five personality)	0.119	-	
Conscientiousness (Big Five personality)	0.500	-	
Emotional Stability (Big Five personality)	0.449	-	
Openness to Experience (Big Five personality)	0.437	-	
Ethnic Identity (Exploration)	0.826	0.826	The whole scale removed
Ethnic Identity (Commitment)	0.833	0.833	
Ethnic Identity (Centrality)	0.619		
Host Cultural Identity (Exploration)	0.807	0.807	
Host Cultural Identity (Commitment)	0.731	0.731	
Secure Attachment	0.736	0.736	
Fearful Attachment	0.791	0.791	
Preoccupied Attachment	0.798	0.798	
Dismissive Attachment	0.605		The whole scale removed

Quality of Contacts with other Chinese	0.797	0.797
Quality of Contacts with host nationals	0.774	0.774
Quantity of Contacts with other Chinese	0.880	0.880
Quantity of Contacts with host nationals	0.902	0.902
Perceived Discrimination	0.861	0.861
Assimilation Strategy	0.791	0.791
Separation Strategy	0.730	0.730
Integration Strategy (general)	0.760	0.760
Integration Strategy (alternation)	0.773	0.773
Integration Strategy (blending)	0.809	0.809

Most of the above scales reached a desirable score of alpha, ranging from 0.730 to 0.902. However, *Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI)* scales used for measuring Big Five personality traits, *Ethnic Identity (Centrality)* and *Dismissive Attachment* appear problematic in the reliability analysis, with alpha considerably below the acceptable threshold, ranging from 0.119 to 0.619.

Due to only two items per scale, *TIPI* scales (Extroversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Openness to Experience) resulted in substantially low internal consistency estimates. This result is in line with the original study of developing and validating these scales (Gosling, Rentfrow & Swann Jr, 2003). However, Gosling, Rentfrow and Swann Jr (2003) emphasised that despite the fact *TIPI* scales were suffered from lower Cronbach's alphas because of limited items on each scale, the effort and advantage of retaining content validity and the small number of items of each scale should not be omitted. Therefore, in order to correct reliability estimates, they conducted a retest in a sub-sample six weeks later. The test-retest correlations were substantial (mean $r = 0.72$), suggesting good test-retest reliability. Due to time constraint, the current study was not able to retest *TIPI* scales within the same sample. Instead, to solve the reliability issues, this study assessed 10 items of the *TIPI* scales independently, each of them representing some human traits or characteristics. The decision of maintaining the usage of *TIPI* scales can be justified by their adequate content, convergent and discriminant validity (Gosling, Rentfrow & Swann Jr, 2003) and the need of restraining the number of survey items.

The alpha of *Ethnic Identity (Centrality)* scale (0.619) was also lower than the acceptable threshold. Furthermore, deletion of any item did not improve the alpha level of the overall scale. Therefore, to be conservative, the *Ethnic Identity Centrality* scale was excluded from the analyses.

The alpha score for *Dismissive Attachment* scale was 0.605, which is below the ideal level of 0.7 as well. Removing some items did not boost the alpha value. Therefore, this

variable was not maintained in the analyses due to the potential resultant errors in significance testing. According to the operation guide for four attachment scales, participants would not be classified into one certain attachment style; instead, participants can score high on more than one scale, showing a mix of attachment styles. Therefore, it is suggested that despite the fact that one attachment scale was deleted, results on other scales are still valuable and would not be affected by the deletion.

4.4 Assumption Testing

4.4.1 Outlier Detection and Treatment

Identifying outliers and conducting appropriate treatment are very important in the process of testing statistical assumptions underlying any parametric analysis. Outlying or extreme responses can considerably distort the outcome of analysis by alternating the means or increasing variability of the dataset (Cousineau & Chartier, 2010). For this reason, the data collected was tested for outliers before analyses were applied. If needed, problematic outliers might be dropped or transformed from the dataset.

Two main types of outliers were detected in this study, including univariate outliers (responses that have an unusual value relating to a single variable) and multivariate outliers (responses that have a unique combination of values relating to several variables) (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson & Tatham, 2006).

Each variable used for regression analysis was examined for univariate outliers. The detection was done through examining a group of boxplots combined with using the threshold value of standard scores of ± 3 which was considered to be more conservative than the suggested threshold (± 3.29) for sample sizes over 100 responses (Cousineau & Chartier, 2010). A total of 11 responses (no. 2, 7, 19, 33, 43, 51, 59, 104, 135, 151, and 174) were identified as univariate outliers because they contained standardised values exceeding ± 3 on at least one variable and they appeared as numbered dots beyond the whiskers in boxplots.

Predominant Identity Negotiation Strategy that is a categorical variable used for ANOVA tests was also detected for outliers in conjunction with two dependent variables, *Cultural Identity Conflict* and *Intercultural Sensitivity*. This was also done using boxplots. 6 responses (no. 21, 39, 88, 169, 199 and 251) were found as outliers onto *Predominant Identity Negotiation Strategy* in relationship to two dependent variables.

Multivariate outliers are usually assessed by using the score of Mahalanobis D^2 which measures the distance of each response from the multidimensional mean of all responses (Hair et al., 2006). The assessment was done in SPSS by first calculating the value of

Mahalanobis D^2 . The probability of the D^2 value was then computed by running the function of $1 - CDF.CHISQ(D^2, df)$ as the D^2 measure follows a Chi-square distribution with degrees of freedom equal to the number of variables involved (Garrett, 1989). As Hair et al. (2006) suggested, responses with the probability of the D^2 less than 0.001 could be identified as potential multivariate outliers. In this case, 6 responses (no. 2, 43, 107, 153, 174, and 181) were designated as multivariate outliers.

To decide whether the outliers significantly affect the regression results, a series of simple regression analyses, multiple regression analyses involving variables containing outliers were conducted with and without the outliers in SPSS. Parke (2013) proposed that if the results with and without outliers lead to similar statistical decisions, and then the outliers are proved to not influence the statistical outcomes and can be maintained in the dataset. Both regression results produced similar significant decisions.

Furthermore, ANOVA tests involving *Predominant Identity Negotiation Strategy* as the independent variable, and *Cultural Identity Conflict* and *Intercultural Sensitivity* as the dependent variables were run twice, including and excluding the outliers. The ANOVA results for comparing cultural identity conflict scores between participants prone to different identity negotiation strategies were almost identical (without outliers, $p=0.041$; with outliers, $p=0.039$). Both ANOVA results for comparing levels of intercultural sensitivity between participants prone to different identity negotiation strategies concluded similar statistical decisions (i.e., both significant). However, the tests without the outliers ($p=0.002$) reported much stronger significant differences between groups than the tests with all responses ($p=0.031$). Despite that, it can be concluded that all potential outliers should be maintained in the dataset to ensure better generalizability of the sample.

4.4.2 Normality

The mean, standard deviation, and scores of skewness and kurtosis are presented in Table 7 on the next page to show the normality of variables used in this study. More than half of the scales reported acceptable level of skewness and kurtosis (absolute z-scores are within 2.58). This threshold was proposed by Ghasemi and Zahediasl (2012) to use in samples with 200 or more cases. The variables indicating a significantly negative skew (i.e., a high proportion of responses were at the higher end of the distribution) are Dependable and self-discipline (personality), Open to new experience and complex (personality), Sympathetic and warm (personality), Calm and emotionally stable (personality), Ethnic Identity (Exploration), and Ethnic Identity (Commitment). The variables with a high percentage of responses falling

at the lower end of the distribution (positive skew) are Intercultural Sensitivity, Anxious and easily upset (personality), Quantity of Contacts with host nationals, Access to Opportunities and Perceived Discrimination. With regard to peakedness of the distribution of the measures, the distribution of Sympathetic and warm (personality), Access to Opportunities, Separation Strategy and Alternation Strategy was pointy and heavy-tailed. On the other hand, Critical and quarrelsome (personality) indicated a flat and light-tailed distribution.

Normality of measures was furthered examined by using Shipario-Wilk tests. The results indicated that only the following measures' normal distribution was assumed ($p>0.05$): Cultural Identity Conflict, Preoccupied Attachment, Quantity of Contacts with other Chinese, and Assimilation Strategy.

In conclusion, a number of variables have violated the assumption of normal distribution according to the level of skewness and kurtosis, and the outcomes of Shipario-Wilk tests. However, it should be noted that within a relatively large sample ($n=255$), it is reasonable that the data contains more variations. Furthermore, severe asymmetry in the distribution might arise due to strong outliers on the low and high ends. However, the examination of outliers in the last section concluded that the potential outliers did not significantly affect the analysis outcomes. This can lead to the conclusion that the problems with normality should be less pressing and would not hinder the performance of statistical tests. In order to be conservative, only clearly significant results would be accepted in this study.

Table 7 –Descriptive statistics of variables in this study

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness	Std. Error	kurtosis	Std. Error
Dependent Variables						
Cultural Identity Conflict	2.40	0.57	0.23	0.16	-0.19	0.32
Intercultural Sensitivity ^a	3.60	0.40	0.44	0.16	-0.07	0.32
Independent Variables						
Extraverted, enthusiastic	3.29	1.03	-0.32	0.16	-0.54	0.32
Critical, quarrelsome ^b	2.83	1.04	0.14	0.16	-0.84	0.32
Dependable, self-disciplined ^{ab}	3.93	0.76	-0.80	0.16	1.40	0.32
Anxious, easily upset ^a	2.71	1.06	0.20	0.16	-0.70	0.32
Open to new experiences, complex ^a	3.91	0.84	-0.82	0.16	0.78	0.32
Reserved, quiet	3.35	1.05	-0.28	0.16	-0.62	0.32
Sympathetic, warm ^{ab}	4.13	0.82	-1.30	0.16	2.72	0.32
Disorganised, careless	2.64	0.97	0.06	0.16	-0.62	0.32
Calm, emotionally stable ^a	3.54	0.89	-0.63	0.16	0.33	0.32
Conventional, uncreative	2.65	0.97	0.17	0.16	-0.50	0.32
Ethnic Identity (Exploration) ^a	3.49	0.88	-0.50	0.16	-0.00	0.32
Ethnic Identity (Commitment) ^a	3.55	0.81	-0.50	0.16	0.52	0.32
Host Cultural Identity (Exploration)	3.84	0.62	-0.38	0.16	0.42	0.32
Host Cultural Identity(Commitment)	3.12	0.69	0.14	0.16	-0.21	0.32

Secure Attachment	3.55	0.50	-0.09	0.16	0.50	0.32
Fearful Attachment	2.84	0.75	0.02	0.16	-0.41	0.32
Preoccupied Attachment	3.03	0.68	0.06	0.16	0.14	0.32
Quality of Contacts with other Chinese	3.55	0.65	-0.07	0.16	0.37	0.32
Quality of Contacts with host nationals	3.48	0.64	0.06	0.16	-0.10	0.32
Quantity of Contacts with other Chinese	3.13	0.82	-0.10	0.16	-0.09	0.32
Quantity of Contacts with host nationals ^a	2.41	0.86	0.84	0.16	0.50	0.32
Access to Social Activities	2.85	0.90	0.00	0.16	-0.33	0.32
Access to Academic-related Activities	3.42	0.85	0.00	0.16	-0.44	0.32
Access to Resources	1.76	0.65	0.28	0.16	-0.72	0.32
Access to Opportunities ^{ab}	1.25	0.52	1.97	0.16	3.06	0.32
Perceived Discrimination ^a	2.34	0.76	0.53	0.16	0.51	0.32
Assimilation Strategy	2.56	0.59	0.14	0.16	0.13	0.32
Separation Strategy ^b	3.28	0.54	-0.16	0.16	0.87	0.32
Integration Strategy (general)	3.44	0.50	0.18	0.16	0.61	0.32
Integration Strategy ^b (alternation)	3.13	0.55	0.09	0.16	0.83	0.32
Integration Strategy (blending)	3.41	0.50	-0.18	0.16	0.47	0.32

^a Absolutescore is greater than 2.58

^bscore is greater than 2.58

4.5 Analysis 1: Predicting Cultural Identity Conflict (CIC)

Analysis 1 aims to identify the risky and protective predictors of cultural identity conflict. Accordingly, the data was first used to examine the statistical linear relationship between every predictor and cultural identity conflict by conducting a series of initial regression analyses involving one predictor at a time. Following that, a multiple regression as an extension included all the significant predictors emerging from the initial analyses in the final model. This was to test for the overall prediction of these predictors as well as to assess relative importance of each predictor when considering the interactions between them. The results of each measure and the final model onto the level of Cultural Identity Conflict are presented as follows:

4.5.1 Effect of Personality Measures onto CIC

Hypothesis 1: openness to experience and emotional stability will significantly lead to lower levels of cultural identity conflict.

Research question 1: Is there a significant relationship between extroversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness and cultural identity conflict?

Section 2.3.4.1 discussed that individual differences in personalities were likely to exert an effect on psychologically and socioculturally intercultural adaptation. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 argued that traits related to openness to experience and emotional stability

would be negatively related to identity conflicts. Due to the mixed results with regard to the other three personality characteristics' effect on intercultural adjustment, Research Question 1 was proposed in this study to explore their relationships with identity conflicts. Thus, five major personality traits in the Big Five model were tested in terms of their effect on level of Cultural Identity Conflict experienced by participants. It is noted that, as mentioned in Section 4.3, Gosling, Rentfrow and Swann Jr's (2003) *Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI)* scales did not pass reliability assessment due to low levels of Cronbach's alpha. However, due to other advantages of the scale, it was utilised in the way that 10 items were tested independently, each displaying a type of human characteristics.

According to the initial regression analysis, all personality items can explain approximately 30.9% of the variances in Cultural Identity Conflict ($R^2 = 0.309$, $F(10, 244) = 10.914$, $p < 0.001$). Specifically, a significant relationship was discovered between 5 items and Cultural Identity Conflict. These 5 personality characteristics are: extroverted and enthusiastic, dependable and self-disciplined, anxious and easily upset, calm and emotionally stable and conventional and uncreative. Detailed statistics are presented in Table 8 below.

Table 8 – Regression analysis – Personality measures onto Cultural Identity Conflict

Variable	b	t	p
Item 1 – Extroverted, enthusiastic	-0.09	-2.50	0.013*
Item 2 – Critical, quarrelsome	0.01	0.19	n.s.
Item 3 – Dependable, self-disciplined	-0.13	-2.52	0.012*
Item 4 – Anxious, easily upset	0.13	4.05	0.000***
Item 5 – Open to new experiences, complex	0.07	1.62	n.s.
Item 6 – Reserved, quiet	-0.05	-1.32	n.s.
Item 7 – Sympathetic, warm	-0.04	-0.87	n.s.
Item 8 – Disorganised, careless	0.04	1.06	n.s.
Item 9 – Calm, emotionally stable	-0.11	-2.73	0.007**
Item 10 – Conventional, uncreative	0.13	3.51	0.001***

n.s. = not significant ($p > 0.05$), * $p < 0.05$ level, ** $p < 0.01$ level, *** $p < 0.001$ level.

As shown from Table 8, participants who tend to be more anxious, easily upset (Emotional Stability-reverse), and conventional, uncreative (Openness to Experience-reverse) experienced significantly higher degree of conflict onto their cultural identities. On the other hand, tendency of being extroverted and enthusiastic (Extroversion), dependable and self-disciplined (Conscientiousness), calm and emotionally stable (Emotional stability) had a significantly protective effect against cultural identity conflict. Consequently, Hypothesis 1 was mainly supported because two items describing Emotional Stability (item 4 and 9) and

one item (item 10) describing Openness to Experience reported significant effects on identity conflict and the directions of the effects were consistent with the hypothesis. Furthermore, this study found that traits relating to Extroversion and Conscientiousness can act as buffers against conflicting experiences concerning participants' cultural identities, accordingly benefiting intercultural adjustment. This answered Research Question 1 and also responded to the debate on the association of these two dimensions with cross-cultural adaptation in the previous literature (Swagler & Jome, 2005). The effects of personalities are explained in more detail in Discussion chapter.

4.5.2 Effect of Ethnic Identity Strength onto CIC

Hypothesis 2a: stronger ethnic identity (exploration and commitment) will significantly protect against identity conflict and negative experiences associated with it.

Hypothesis 2b: For participants who have experienced high level of discrimination, a strong ethnic identity (exploration and commitment) will lead to greater cultural identity conflict.

As mentioned in Section 2.3.4.2, the question if a stronger ethnic identity minimises or exacerbates identity conflict needs to be further investigated. Although a positive relationship between a high-level ethnic identity and psychological adaptation has been found in the literature, some disagreement that focused on the possibly negative interaction effect between the strength of ethnic identity and racial discrimination on cross-cultural adaptation is concerned. Thus, Hypothesis 2a argued ethnic identity (exploration and commitment) would be negatively related to experiences associated with identity conflicts; additionally, Hypothesis 2b proposed that strong ethnic identity would lead to higher levels of cultural identity conflict when participants also reported high levels of discrimination. Accordingly, after regression tests of two components of ethnic identity (Exploration and Commitment), the interaction terms between the two components and Perceived Discrimination were entered in the regression to assess their combined effect on Cultural identity Conflict.

In order to test Hypothesis 2a, Ethnic Identity Exploration and Commitment were first entered in the regression test in the same block. The results of this analysis were displayed in Table 9. As expected, Chinese students having greater commitment towards their Chinese background tended to experience significantly lower level of identity conflict, supporting the protective role of ethnic identity against cultural identity conflict. Unfortunately, there was no significant relationship between engagement in exploration of ethnic identity and cultural identity conflict although the relationship was in the predicted negative direction. Ethnic identity variables, in total, accounted for 11.2% of variance in Cultural Identity Conflict

($R^2 = 0.112$, $F(1, 252) = 15.916$, $p < 0.001$). This means Hypothesis 2 was only partly supported.

With regard to the interaction effect proposed in Hypothesis 2b, there turned out to be no significant interactions between Ethnic Identity Exploration or Ethnic Identity Commitment and Perceived Discrimination on Cultural Identity Conflict (statistics see Table 9). Additionally, by examining the simple slopes, it was confirmed that the significant negative relationship between ethnic identity (commitment) and identity conflict unconditionally emerged in individuals whoever with lower ($b = -0.25$, $t = -3.69$, $p < 0.001$), average ($b = -0.24$, $t = -5.16$, $p < 0.001$) or higher ($b = -0.23$, $t = -3.81$, $p < 0.001$) levels of discrimination, indicating discrimination did not moderate the buffering effect of ethnic identity commitment again identity conflict. Similarly, except for participants with average level of discrimination, ethnic identity exploration significantly predicted less identity conflict ($b = -0.11$, $t = -2.29$, $p = 0.023$); the association between ethnic exploration and identity conflict remained non-significant for those who reported lower and higher levels of discrimination. Overall, these results are contradicted with Hypothesis 2b that assumed strong ethnic identity would increase the risk of identity conflict when participants reported greater level of perceived discrimination. Hence, Hypothesis 2 was not supported.

Table 9 – Regression analysis – Strength of Ethnic Identity onto Cultural Identity Conflict

Variable	b	t	p
<i>Main Effect</i>			
Ethnic Identity (Exploration)	-0.20	-0.45	n.s.
Ethnic Identity (Commitment)	-0.23	-4.85	0.000***
<i>Interaction Effect</i>			
Ethnic Identity (Exploration) x Discrimination	-0.005	-0.06	n.s.
Ethnic Identity (Commitment) x Discrimination	0.009	0.15	n.s.

n.s. = not significant ($p > 0.05$), *** $p < 0.001$ level.

4.5.3 Effect of Host Cultural Identity Strength onto CIC

Research question 2a: Is there a significant relationship between host cultural identity and cultural identity conflict?

Research question 2b: Is there an interaction effect between components of ethnic identity and host cultural identity onto cultural identity conflict?

In order to answer Research Question 2a, the relationship between strength of host cultural identity and cultural identity conflict was explored by entering two subscales of host

cultural identity (exploration and commitment) in the regression. Results in details are presented in Table 10. The results indicated that exploration of host-culture identity affected cultural identity conflict significantly; namely, participants who reported to have undertaken more exploration into self-perceptions associated with the host culture had lower level of identity conflict. However, there appeared non-significant relationship between cultural identity conflict and commitment to host culture identity, implying that the affective bond with host cultures will not significantly impact the risk of experiencing identity conflict. This is particularly consistent with Stuart and Ward's (2011) study that found no significant main relations between host-culture identity (belonging component) and identity conflict. In total, host cultural identity (exploration and commitment) explained 6.3% of the variance in Cultural Identity Conflict ($R^2 = 0.063$, $F(1, 252) = 8.470$, $p < 0.001$).

Table 10 – Regression analysis – Strength of Host Cultural Identity onto Cultural Identity Conflict

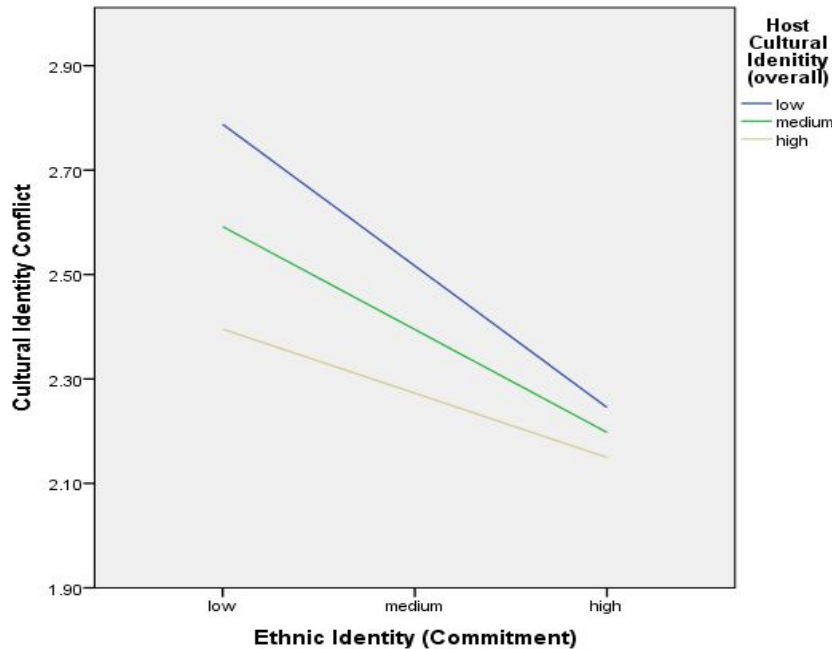
Variable	b	t	p
<i>Main Effect</i>			
Host Cultural Identity (Exploration)	-0.20	-3.40	0.001***
Host Cultural Identity (Commitment)	-0.06	-1.17	n.s.
<i>Interaction Effect</i>			
Ethnic Identity (Exploration) x Host Cultural Identity (Exploration)	-0.06	-0.96	n.s.
Ethnic Identity (Exploration) x Host Cultural Identity (Commitment)	0.61	1.00	n.s.
Ethnic Identity (Commitment) x Host Cultural Identity (Exploration)	0.12	1.36	n.s.
Ethnic Identity (Commitment) x Host Cultural Identity (Commitment)	0.11	1.84	n.s.
Ethnic Identity (Exploration) x Host Cultural Identity (overall)	0.01	0.12	n.s.
Ethnic Identity (Commitment) x Host Cultural identity (overall)	0.17	2.35	0.020*

n.s. = not significant ($p > 0.05$), * $p < 0.05$ level, *** $p < 0.001$ level.

Furthermore, according to the approach proposed by Stuart and Ward (2011), the predictive power of host-culture identity was further tested in conjunction with ethnic identity. In order to extend Stuart and Ward's (2011) finding that only involved the attachment dimension of host cultural identity, the two components of ethnic identity were tested with both exploration and commitment of host-culture identity in prediction of identity conflict. However, none of the interaction terms were significant. The results in details are shown in Table 10. To further confirm that, an overall measure of host cultural identity was created by averaging the composite values of both exploration and commitment scales and was entered into regression as a moderation variable for ethnic identity (exploration and commitment). The results are also presented in Table 10. Results indicated that the conjunction of

commitment towards Chinese identity with overall identification towards host-culture identity significantly influenced identity conflict at a 0.05 level. This interaction effect was also illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4 – the effect of Ethnic Identity (commitment) on Cultural Identity Conflict at low, medium and high level of host identity overall



The first important finding derived from Figure 4 is that the significant main effect between participants' commitment to their Chinese identity and experiences of identity conflict was again emphasised. Ethnic commitment was significantly and negatively related to identity conflict for participants who ever reported low ($b = -0.34$, $t = -5.70$, $p < 0.001$), average ($b = -0.24$, $t = -5.12$, $p < 0.001$) or high level ($b = -0.15$, $t = -2.37$, $p = 0.019$) of host-culture identity. The graph also revealed that a combination of strong Ethnic Identity Commitment and strong Host Cultural Identity (overall) led to the lowest levels of identity conflict; whereas low Ethnic Identity Commitment in conjunction with low Host Cultural Identity predicted greatly increased level of identity conflict. This finding corresponds to a great many of evidence in the previous literature that commitment towards two cultures (integration strategy) did not usually create contradicting feelings and instead was mainly beneficial for intercultural adjustment. Moreover, by looking at the mean differences of identity conflict, it can be concluded that the moderation effect of host-culture identity was much greater for individuals who reported lower level of ethnic commitments than those who reported higher level of ethnic identity commitment. In other words, for individuals who have obtained a strong attachment onto their ethnic background, having a low, average or high level of host cultural identity did not have a dramatically different impact on their levels of

identity conflict (the mean scores of identity conflict were very close). In contrast, for those who had a weak link with their ethnic root as well as low orientation to host cultures, they experienced substantially higher levels of conflict and confusion about their cultural identities than those with a medium and high-level of host cultural identity; on the other hand, by gradually developing host-culture identity, their conflicting feelings regarding to cultural identity would drop considerably. This, in some way, suggests that no matter which culture sojourners lean on more, gaining a stable sense of cultural self by drawing on at least one culture would greatly protect them from experiencing identity conflict.

4.5.4 Effect of Attachment Styles onto CIC

Hypothesis 3a: Secure attachment will significantly lead to lower levels of cultural identity conflict.

Hypothesis 3b: Preoccupied attachment will significantly increase the levels of cultural identity conflict.

Research question 3: Do dismissive and fearful attachment have a significant association with cultural identity conflict?

Attachment styles measure how people's self-images interact with their perceptions and affections towards close others. Derived from that, attachment styles have also been used to explain how people see themselves related to group membership and their perceptions of outgroups. In the context of this study, attachment styles were used to assess if participants feel themselves and co-nationals worthy of love and support and if they feel host nationals trustworthy; furthermore, how that influences their identity conflict between home- and host-cultures. Based on the previous findings, Hypothesis 3a argued that Secure Attachment would be negatively linked with identity conflict whereas Hypothesis 3b anticipated that Preoccupied Attachment would increase levels of identity conflict. Because no significant relationship was found between dismissive, fearful attachment and identity conflict, Research Question 3 was arisen. However, because Dismissive Attachment had low internal consistency and was removed from the data, only three remaining attachment styles (i.e., Secure, Fearful, and Preoccupied) were included in the regression analysis.

Results are shown in Table 11 on the following page. The three attachment styles appeared to have powerful force in predicting Cultural Identity Conflict, accounting for 40.6% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.406$, $F(3, 249) = 56.660$, $p < 0.001$). As anticipated in Hypothesis 3a and 3b, participants that were prone to a secure attachment style experienced

significantly lower level of identity conflict whereas those who had a preoccupied attachment experienced significantly greater identity conflict. The results also showed that there was a significant positive relationship between fearful attachment styles and Cultural Identity Conflict, which answered Research Question 3.

Table 11 – Regression analysis – Attachment Styles onto Cultural Identity Conflict

Variable	b	t	p
Secure Attachment	-0.42	-6.76	0.000***
Fearful Attachment	0.17	-3.81	0.000***
Preoccupied Attachment	0.26	-5.94	0.000***

n.s. = not significant ($p > 0.05$), *** $p < 0.001$ level.

4.5.5 Effect of Contacts with Other Chinese and Host Nationals onto CIC

Hypothesis 4a: Higher quality of contacts with other Chinese will significantly lead to lower levels of cultural identity conflict.

Hypothesis 4b: High quantity of contacts with other Chinese will significantly lead to lower levels of cultural identity conflict only for the participants who have resided in the host country for a short period of time.

Hypothesis 4c: Higher quality of contacts with host nationals will significantly lead to lower levels of cultural identity conflict.

Hypothesis 4d: Frequent contacts with host nationals will significantly increase the risk of cultural identity conflict only when participants reported low-level quality of contacts with host nationals.

The significance of intergroup contacts has been highlighted in the research of cross-cultural transition. It was expected in this study that satisfying and positive relations with both co-nationals and host-nationals would predict lower levels of identity conflict (Hypothesis 4a and 4c). Furthermore, as questions concerning the relationship between frequency of contacts with two parties and intercultural adjustment have been unsettled, the current study suggested examining the quantity of contacts in conjunction with other variables that might moderate the main effects. As mentioned in Section 2.3.4.3.2, some literature raised the argument that the effect of quantity of contacts with co-nationals on cross-cultural adaptation might depend on the length of residence in the host country. Therefore, Hypothesis 4b argued that quantity of contacts with other Chinese might only reduce identity conflict when participants have resided in the host country for a short period. Moreover, it was also hypothesised in this study that if participants experienced unsatisfying

contacts with host nationals, the more frequent their contacts were, the more identity conflict participants might experience (Hypothesis 4d). Hence, the interaction term between quantity and quality of contacts with host-nationals were also used to predict levels of identity conflict.

Regression results in Table 12 indicated that having more satisfying contacts with other Chinese and host nationals significantly reduced levels of identity conflict. These results fully supported Hypothesis 4a and 4c. The amount of contacts with both Chinese and host nationals alone did not appear to significantly relate to identity conflict. In total, these four variables with regards to intergroup contacts explained a significant proportion (20%) of the variance in Cultural Identity Conflict ($R^2 = 0.200$, $F(4, 250) = 15.599$, $p < 0.001$).

Further analyses involving length of settlement as a moderating variable for quantity of contacts with other Chinese was conducted and presented in the Table 12. There was non-significant relationship between this interaction term and levels of identity conflict, suggesting in the current samples, no matter how long participants have settled in the host countries, the frequency of contacts with other Chinese did not significantly influence their experience of identity conflict. This means Hypothesis 4b was not supported.

Similarly, the interaction between quantity and quality with host nationals also reported a statistically non-significant effect on cultural identity conflict. Further results of the simple slope computation showed that the significant negative relationship between quality of contacts with host nationals and identity conflict occurred in participants who reported low, medium or high quality of contacts with host nationals. This highlighted the importance of having a high quality rather than solely frequent relationship with host nationals in protecting Chinese students from experiencing cultural identity conflict.

Table 12 – Regression analysis – Contacts with Other Chinese and Host Nationals onto Cultural Identity Conflict

Variable	b	t	p
<i>Main Effect</i>			
Quality of Contacts with Other Chinese	-0.24	-4.52	0.000***
Quality of Contacts with Host Nationals	-0.25	-4.48	0.000***
Quantity of Contacts with Other Chinese	0.01	0.14	n.s.
Quantity of Contacts with Host Nationals	-0.05	-0.07	n.s.
<i>Interaction Effect</i>			
Quantity of Contacts with Other Chinese x Length of actual Residence	0.01	0.74	n.s.
Quality of Contacts with Host Nationals x Quantity of Contacts with Host Nationals	-0.11	-1.88	n.s.

n.s. = not significant ($p > 0.05$), *** $p < 0.001$ level.

4.5.6 Effect of Perceived Discrimination onto CIC

Hypothesis 5: Perceived discrimination will significantly lead to higher levels of cultural identity conflict.

Perceived racial discrimination has been widely considered as a significant stressor linked with cross-cultural adjustment problems. Therefore, Hypothesis 5 argued that participants who perceived themselves or acquaintances to be discriminated more frequently would experience higher level of identity conflict. The result strongly supported the hypothesis. Table 13 indicated that Perceived Discrimination significantly predicted greater Cultural Identity Conflict and it accounted for 13% of variances in Cultural Identity Conflict ($R^2 = 0.130$, $F(1, 253) = 37.815$, $p < 0.001$).

Table 13 – Regression analysis – Perceived Discrimination onto Cultural Identity Conflict

Variable	b	t	p
Perceived Discrimination	0.27	6.49	0.000***

n.s. = not significant ($p > 0.05$), *** $p < 0.001$ level.

4.5.7 Effect of Perceived Permeability onto CIC

Hypothesis 6: Perceived intergroup impermeability will significantly lead to higher levels of cultural identity conflict.

Hypothesis 6 argued that participants who perceived the intergroup boundaries were impermeable would have greater identity conflict. Consequently, four items relating to participants' perceptions on how easy access to activities with host nationals was and how fair access to resources and opportunities was were entered together in a regression test. Overall, Perceived Permeability can explain 11.4% of the variances in identity conflict ($R^2 = 0.114$, $F(4, 250) = 8.031$, $p < 0.001$). The detailed statistics of every item were displayed in Table 14 on the next page. Except for Access to Resources that did not show any significant association with Cultural Identity Conflict, the other three items were significantly related to levels of cultural identity conflict. Specifically, the more easily Chinese students thought they can join social and academic activities with host national students, the lower identity conflict they experienced. Similarly, compared with domestic students, Chinese students who perceived that they had equal or more access to opportunities (e.g., scholarship, internship and employment) also experienced significantly less identity conflict. The results mostly supported Hypothesis 6. It suggests that for sojourners who are likely to feel disadvantaged and lower-status in a host culture, the perception of being treated as a member of the host

society greatly mediates the questioning on their own cultural background as well as aspiration towards host cultures.

Table 14 – Regression analysis –Perceived Permeability onto Cultural Identity Conflict

Variable	b	t	p
Access to Social Activities	-0.12	-2.97	0.003**
Access to Academic-related Activities	-0.12	-4.67	0.008**
Access to Resources	-0.02	-0.43	n.s.
Access to Opportunities	-0.17	2.57	0.011*

n.s. = not significant ($p > 0.05$), * $p < 0.05$ level, ** $p < 0.01$ level.

4.5.8 Effect of Preference of Cultural Identity Negotiation Strategies onto CIC

Hypothesis 7: higher preference in integration (general) strategy will lead to lower levels of cultural identity conflict while assimilation and separation strategy increase levels of identity conflict.

Research question 4: how do blending and alternation strategy influence cultural identity conflict?

The predictive power of participants' preference of different negotiation strategies on identity conflict was examined in this section. This was undertaken in order to test Hypothesis 7 and answer Research Question 4 so as to gain insights into the ways in which each strategy affect the risk of experiencing conflicts concerning ethnic identity and host cultural identity. The preference scores of five strategies, Assimilation, Separation, Integration (general), Integration (alternation) and Integration (blending) were entered as independent variables together into regression analysis. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 15 below.

Table 15 – Regression analysis – Cultural Identity Negotiation Strategies onto Cultural Identity Conflict

Variable	b	t	p
Assimilation Strategy	0.40	6.19	0.000***
Separation Strategy	0.27	3.68	0.000***
Integration Strategy (general)	-0.09	-1.16	n.s.
Integration Strategy (alternation)	0.14	2.04	0.04*
Integration Strategy (blending)	-0.09	-1.16	n.s.

n.s. = not significant ($p > 0.05$), * $p < 0.05$ level, *** $p < 0.001$ level.

In total, identity negotiation strategies explained 19.9% of the variance in identity conflict ($R^2 = 0.199$, $F(5, 239) = 11.870$, $p < 0.001$). Specifically, the results have shown that preference of Assimilation Strategy significantly increased the risk of Cultural Identity

Conflict. This means that participants who tended to dispose of their Chinese identity and instead to adopt host cultures experienced significantly greater conflicts on their cultural identities. Separation Strategy which refers to maintaining ethnic identity while not engaging in host societies also predicted higher level of identity conflict. These two results supported the second part of Hypothesis 7. Interestingly, there is a mixed result among three types of Integration strategies. Integration Strategy (general) that measured participants' intention and expected behaviours of integrating two cultures without mentioning contexts had a negative but non-significant relationship with identity conflict. This means the first part of Hypothesis 7 was not supported. Moreover, Alternation strategy as one subtype of integration strategy was found to significantly link with higher levels of Cultural Identity Conflict whilst Blending strategy reduced the risk of Cultural Identity Conflict although it is not a significant relationship. This is a very meaningful finding for Research Question 4. It reveals despite enormous evidence showing that integration helps eliminate sojourners' adaptation problems in general, when variations of integration strategy are taken into accounts, tendency of practicing integration by changing attitudes or behaviours depending on the contexts (i.e., alternation) actually worsens identity conflict.

4.5.9 Effect of Demographics onto CIC

Regression analysis including the demographics variables proposed in Methodology chapter was carried out to examine if they exerted a significant effect on Cultural Identity Conflict. This is worthy to be done because it might offer some insights for educational institutions or relevant entities to tackle intercultural conflict issues of different subgroups within Chinese students. Therefore, eleven demographics measures were entered in the initial regression tests separately, including Age, Gender, Employment Status, Residing Area in China, Accommodation Styles in the Host Country, Length of Residence in the Host Country, Intention to Stay Permanently in the Host Country, Holidays in Other Foreign Countries, Short-term (over 3 months) Stay in Other Foreign Countries, Previous Cross-cultural Training and Self-reported English Skill.

Of all these variables, only Age and Self-reported English Skill emerged to have a significant relationship with Cultural Identity Conflict at a 0.05 level. The statistics in details are presented in Table 16. This implies that as Chinese university students grow by age, they tended to experience less conflicts and confusion on how they see themselves in relation to their cultural background and environments. Moreover, participants who reported a more proficient English skill had lower levels of identity conflict. However, this study only used one item to measure participants' English skills which might be highly influenced by socially

desirable answers. In order to avoid that and thoroughly investigate into the effect of English skills on Cultural Identity Conflict, future studies could employ a more comprehensive and detailed scale.

Table 16 – Regression analysis – Demographics onto Cultural Identity Conflict

Variable	b	t	p
Age	-0.02	-2.15	0.03*
Self-reported English Skills	-0.08	-2.00	0.04*

* $p < 0.05$ level

4.5.10 Final Model – Multiple Regression

After assessing the predictive power of every independent variable individually, a multiple regression analysis was undertaken with the predictors appearing significant in those initial regression analyses. This was done to fulfill two objectives: (1) to test the overall predictive power of the set of independent variables that are of interests in the current study; and (2) to compare the importance of each independent variable in the prediction of Cultural Identity Conflict with taking into account the interrelationships between them. Consequently, 21 significant variables derived from the initial regression were entered into a multiple regression analysis in SPSS simultaneously. They are Age, Self-reported English Skills, Extroverted and enthusiastic, Dependable and self-disciplined, Anxious and easily upset, Calm and emotionally stable, Conventional and uncreative, Ethnic Identity (commitment), Host Cultural Identity (exploration) , Secure Attachment, Fearful Attachment, Preoccupied Attachment, Quality of Contacts with Other Chinese, Quality of Contacts with Host Nationals, Access to Social Activities, Access to Academic-related Activities, Access to Opportunities, Perceived Discrimination, Assimilation, Separation, and Integration (alternation). The forced enter method was chosen rather than the stepwise method because including all the selected predictors allows the disclosure of redundant and influential predictors relative to other chosen ones.

Before interpreting the results, whether there existed multicollinearity in the dataset needed to be confirmed. To do so, variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance values were reviewed. It has been suggested that VIF statistics below 10 (Bowerman & O'Connell, 1990) and tolerance statistics above 0.2 (Menard, 1995) indicated the multiple regression could be free from concerns in terms of strong collinearity between predictors. The values of VIF and tolerance of all entered independent variables fulfilled the requirements, thus showing no multicollinearity.

Of the predictors included in the analysis, 8 of them emerged as significant influences on cultural identity conflict, accounting for 59.7% of the total variance in Cultural Identity Conflict ($R^2 = 0.597$, $F(21, 217) = 15.336$, $p < 0.001$). The statistical values of the significant predictors in the multivariate model were shown in Table 17 and the sequence of the predictors is based on the magnitude of the beta values.

Table 17 – Significant predictors of Cultural Identity Conflict in the multiple regression model

Variable	b	beta	t	p
Preoccupied Attachment	0.18	0.22	4.17	0.000***
Ethnic Identity (Commitment)	-0.15	-0.20	-3.69	0.000***
Dependable, self-disciplined	-0.12	-0.17	-3.24	0.001***
Access to Academic-related Activities	-0.09	-0.14	-2.81	0.005**
Assimilation Strategy	0.14	0.14	2.38	0.018*
Secure Attachment	-0.16	-0.14	-2.41	0.017*
Fearful Attachment	0.09	0.12	2.05	0.042*
Discrimination	0.08	0.11	2.10	0.037*

* $p < 0.05$ level, ** $p < 0.01$ level, *** $p < 0.001$ level.

In terms of the direction of each predictor's relationship with Cultural Identity Conflict, four predictors (Preoccupied Attachment, Assimilation Strategy, Fearful Attachment and Discrimination) had a significantly boosting impact on identity conflict while the other four predictors (Ethnic Identity Commitment, Dependable and self-disciplined, Access to Academic-related Activities and Secure Attachment) had a significantly suppressing influence on identity conflict. The nature of the relationships is fully in line with the initial regression results, confirming the validity of these variables' predictive direction when considering the variables with each other.

Moreover, the comparison of the beta coefficients across the variables revealed the relative importance of each significant predictor. As shown in Table 17, Preoccupied Attachment had the strongest power in predicting levels of identity conflict ($\beta = 0.22$) and the statistical significance of its prediction is very high, at a 0.001 level. This result fully supported Hypothesis 3b that assumed having a preoccupied attachment style would lead to greater identity conflict. Additionally, other two attachment styles also exhibited significant contribution to explaining identity conflict, suggesting attachment style is one of the primary influences in the final model. Participants' commitments to their Chinese heritage culture also demonstrated a strong effect on identity conflict ($\beta = -0.20$) and emerged as the most important protective predictor in the model. In contrast, there appeared no significant relation between host cultural identity exploration and identity conflict. This underlines that feeling

rooted into ethnic culture had a more marked effect on preventing Chinese students from experiencing identity conflict, compared with undertaking exploration activities about host culture. With regard to personality measures, only Dependable and self-disciplined remained as a significant predictor in the multiple regression model and it has relatively stronger impact on identity conflict ($\beta = -0.17$). Moreover, Access to Academic-related activity emerged as a significantly negative influence on identity conflict. It suggested that surveyed Chinese students were most concerned about the inclusion in studying activities with host national students and the easier they are able to do so, the less cultural identity conflicts they felt. In terms of the effect of cultural identity negotiation strategies, only Assimilation strategy turned out to be a significant variable in the final model ($\beta = 0.14$). Although the results did not provide valuable information on other strategies, especially the three types of integration strategies of most interest, the strong positive effect of Assimilation on identity conflict emphasised that merely discarding the heritage culture and inspire to the host culture exerted a destructive effect on participants' struggles concerning structuring and stabilising their cultural identity. Last, Discrimination also had a significant relationship with identity conflict ($\beta = 0.11$), although it appeared as the least important predictor in the model.

4.6 Analysis 2: Comparing Cultural Identity Conflict among Groups of Predominant Cultural Identity Negotiation Strategies

Research question 5: Is there a difference between the effect of choosing assimilation, separation and integration (general, blending and alternation) as the predominant negotiation strategy on cultural identity conflict?

To extend the regression findings of identity negotiation strategy in Analysis 1, Analysis 2 intends to examine the influence of adopting different negotiation strategies as participants' *predominant strategy*. This was done in order to answer Research Question 5 that asked when chosen as the most preferred strategy, which strategy would lead to greater levels of identity conflict? Accordingly, an ANOVA test was run with Predominant Cultural Identity Negotiation Strategy as the independent variable so as to compare levels of identity conflict among participants falling into different strategy groups based on their predominant strategies.

As discussed in the Methodology chapter (see Section 3.5.2), Predominant Cultural Identity Conflict as a grouping variable was formed by grouping participants into five strategy categories according to the highest mean score received on one strategy. By being categorised into one strategy group, it indicates that the strategy was the most preferred and

predominant strategy used by the participant. As the frequency statistics shown in Table 18, Integration (blending) was the most popular identity negotiation strategy among surveyed Chinese students (24.9%). Integration (general) and Separation were also favoured by around one fifth of students (21.6% and 21.2% respectively). Following that, Alternation strategy was chosen by 14.5% of the participants as their dominant strategy. Assimilation as the least preferred strategy was chosen by 20 (7.8%) participants as their favourite strategy.

Table 18 – Frequency statistics of Predominant Cultural Identity Conflict

Strategy	No. of participants	% of total participants
Assimilation	20	7.8%
Separation	54	21.2%
Integration (general)	55	21.6%
Integration (alternation)	37	14.5%
Integration (blending)	89	24.9%
Total	255	100%

Consequently, an ANOVA with Predominant Cultural Identity Negotiation Strategy as the factor and Cultural Identity Conflict as the dependent variable was then undertaken. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was violated, shown by the significant Levene's statistic ($p = 0.032$). Therefore, the more robust Welch F-ratio should be used to interpret the result (Field, 2013). The Welch F-ratio indicated that there was statistically significant difference between the mean score for Cultural Identity Conflict among five groups ($F(4, 82.357), p = 0.039$) and the effect size is between small to medium level ($\omega = 0.21$), according to Kirk's (1996) benchmark.

To assess which strategy groups differ in affecting levels of identity conflict, further analysis was carried out by using planned contrasts. Based on the directions of influences revealed in regression results in Section 4.5.8, Assimilation, Separation and Integration (alternation) appeared to be risky strategies for participants as they boosted cultural identity conflict, while Integration (general) and Integration (blending) as protective strategies for participants showed a suppressing effect on such conflict. Hence, dependent on these findings, this study conducted the following contrasts (Table 19 on the next page).

Table 19 – groups included in each planned comparison

Contrast	Groups included
1	Assimilation, Separation, Integration (alternation) vs. Integration (general), Integration (blending)
2	Assimilation, Separation vs. Integration (alternation)
3	Assimilation vs. Separation
4	Integration (general) vs. Integration (blending)

Contrast 1 compared the risky strategies and the protective strategies. The result is consistent with the regression findings that being more prone to Assimilation, Separation and Integration (alternation) led to worse identity conflict than Integration (general) and Integration (blending) ($t(83.078) = 3.109, p = 0.003, r = 0.32$).

Furthermore, to evaluate which risky strategy had a larger boosting effect on identity conflict, Contrast 2 compared the mean values of identity conflict between participants who preferred assimilation and separation the most with those who favoured integration (alternation) the most. It was shown that there was no significant difference between the mean scores of identity conflict of these three groups ($t(62.949) = 0.917, p = 0.363$).

Contrast 3 then compared the effect of adopting assimilation and separation as the predominant strategy. The result revealed that the degree of Cultural Identity Conflict was significantly different in Chinese students more prone to Assimilation strategy compared with those more prone to Separation strategy ($t(27.677) = 2.270, p = 0.031$) and the effect size was moderate ($r = 0.40$). Specifically, it implies that choosing to discard ethnic identity while seeking involvement in the host society resulted in much greater identity conflict than remaining faithful to heritage culture.

Two protective strategies were also compared in Contrast 4. Unfortunately, there was non-significant difference for identity conflict scores between Integration (general) group and Integration (blending) group ($t(98.330) = -0.083, p = 0.934$), although the mean score of identity conflict in integration group is slightly lower than the blending group ($MD = -0.008$). This means that adopting blending strategy did not significantly lower cultural identity conflict compared to adopting a general and unspecific integrated strategy.

4.7 Analysis 3: Impact of Cultural Identity Conflict and Cultural Identity Negotiation Strategy on Intercultural Sensitivity

4.7.1 Effect of Cultural Identity Conflict on Level of Intercultural Sensitivity

Hypothesis 8a: cultural identity conflict will reduce the level of intercultural sensitivity.

Hypothesis 8a anticipated that cultural identity conflict would be negatively related with intercultural sensitivity. To test this hypothesis, a bivariate regression analysis was undertaken with identity conflict entered as the independent variable. The result of the test was presented in Table 20. It indicated that as the levels of cultural identity conflict increased, the levels of intercultural sensitivity significantly decreased. Moreover, Cultural Identity Conflict alone can account for 13.9% of the variance for Intercultural Sensitivity, confirming their significant relationship ($R^2 = 0.139$, $F(1, 244) = 39.454$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, Hypothesis 8a was strongly supported.

Table 20 – Regression analysis – Cultural Identity Conflict onto Intercultural Sensitivity

Variable	b	t	p
Cultural Identity Conflict	-0.26	-6.28	0.000***

*** $p < 0.001$ level

4.7.2 Impact of adopting different Negotiation Strategies on Intercultural Sensitivity

Hypothesis 8b: Integration strategy (general, alternation, and blending) will predict higher levels of intercultural sensitivity while assimilation and separation will lead to lower levels of intercultural sensitivity.

The current study hypothesised that Integration (general, alternation and blending) would be positively associated with intercultural sensitivity whereas the remaining strategies (assimilation and separation) would be negatively related with intercultural sensitivity (Hypothesis 8b). Consequently, the measures of these five strategies were entered into a multiple regression analysis to test their effects on intercultural sensitivity. The total model explained 15.6 % of the variance in intercultural sensitivity.

Table 21 – Regression analysis – Cultural Identity Negotiation Strategies onto Intercultural Sensitivity

Variable	b	t	p
Assimilation Strategy	-0.10	-2.10	0.037*
Separation Strategy	-0.20	-3.70	0.000***
Integration Strategy (general)	0.08	1.41	n.s.
Integration Strategy (alternation)	-0.12	-2.42	0.016*
Integration Strategy (blending)	0.12	2.08	0.038*

n.s. = not significant ($p > 0.05$), * $p < 0.05$ level, *** $p < 0.001$ level.

Specifically, the statistics presented in Table 21 indicated that the preference degree of Assimilation, Separation, Alternation and Blending strategy significantly predicted participants' ability of differentiating and appreciating cultural differences. Among these four strategies, higher preference for Assimilation, Separation strategies resulted in lower levels of intercultural sensitivity. This finding is in accordance to the second part of Hypothesis 8b. On the contrary to the expectation, Integration (alternation) surprisingly exerted a negative impact on intercultural sensitivity, which is contradicted with the first part of Hypothesis 8b. This is a rather interesting finding as it is also contradicted to LaFromboise, Coleman and Gerton's (1993) hypothesis that using alternation as the approach to internalise a second culture facilitates acquisition of a range of intercultural skills including culturally appropriate roles and behaviours, knowledge of other cultural values and positive attitudes in two cultures. This discrepancy between this present finding and past arguments will be further discussed in the next chapter. Moreover, in line with the anticipation, higher scores on the Blending strategy led to significantly greater levels of intercultural sensitivity. The direction of the relationship between Integration strategy (general) and intercultural sensitivity is consistent with the hypothesis (i.e., positive). However, this effect was not significant. Thus, in summary, Hypothesis 8b is mostly supported.

4.8 Comparison between New Zealand and Australia

The purpose of employing two samples of Chinese students from a New Zealand university and an Australian university in this study is to give insights into Chinese students' intercultural experiences in these two socioculturally similar settings based on a comparison. Accordingly, two national samples were compared and contrasted in the three following aspects:

4.8.1 *The levels of cultural identity conflict experienced by Chinese students*

To compare the severity of cultural identity conflict among Chinese students in two institutions, an independent t-test was conducted. The results have shown that on average, Chinese students who go to the New Zealand university (UC) experienced lower levels of cultural identity conflict ($M = 2.30$, $SE = 0.053$), compared with those studying in UA in Australia ($M = 2.46$, $SE = 0.047$). This mean difference was significant at a 0.05 level ($t(253) = -2.21$, $p = 0.028$) and represented a small-to-medium effect ($r = 0.14$).

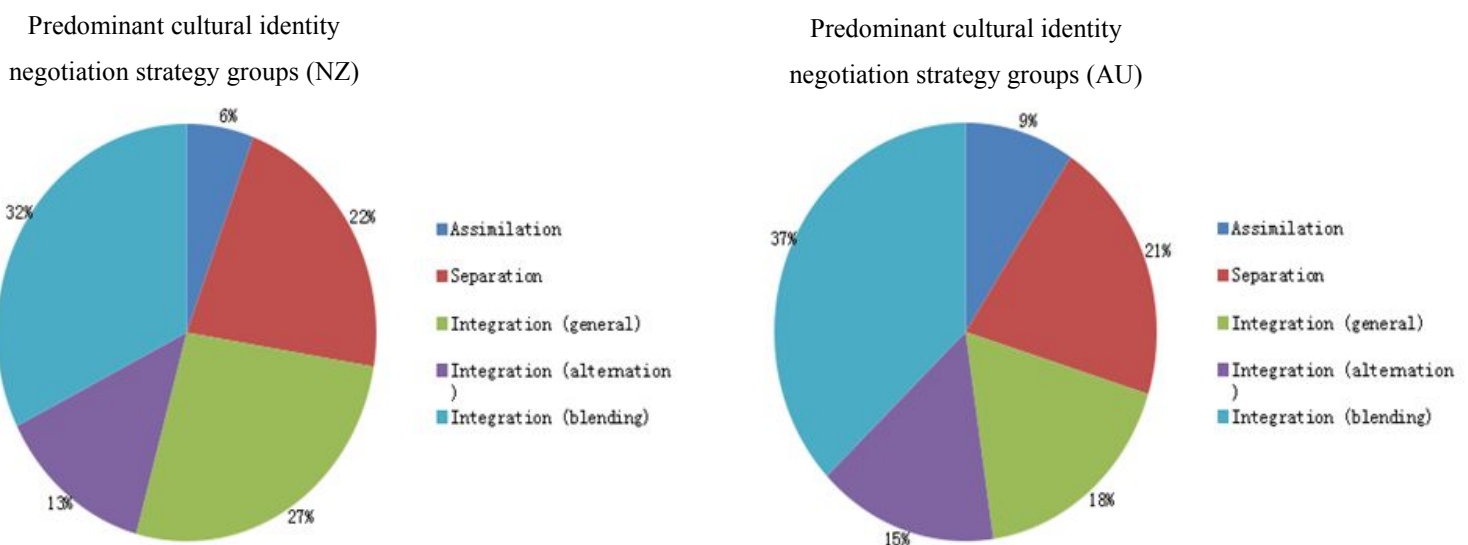
4.8.2 The most preferred cultural identity negotiation strategies among Chinese students

The data in the variable of “Predominant Cultural Identity Negotiation Strategy” was split based on the residing country of participants. The composition of different predominant strategy groups within two countries are illustrated in two pie charts in Figure 5.

The results have shown that within two samples, there were the most respondents having rated the highest scores on the Blending strategy (32% and 37% in NZ and AU samples respectively). In contrast, the Alternation groups representing the other variation of integration strategy were only composed of slightly less than half of the number of people in the blending groups (13% and 15% in NZ and AU samples respectively). This suggests that the largest proportion of Chinese students in both institutions preferred mixing Chinese and host cultures into their identities and did not perceive a tug-of-war between the two cultures. Overall, three Integration strategy groups (general, blending and alternation) accounted for almost three forth of the total participants in both NZ (72%) and AU (70%) samples. This implies that an absolute majority of Chinese students pursued maintenance of heritage culture as well as engagement in the wider host society.

In terms of other two monoculturally negotiation approaches, both samples contained the least participants adopting Assimilation as their predominant approach to negotiate home- and host-cultures although the AU sample (9%) had a little bigger percentage than the NZ sample (6%). Moreover, there were 22% of students in NZ and 21% of students in AU chose Separation as their favourite strategy. These results mean that if having to choose to conform to only one culture, most of Chinese students decided on their home culture.

Figure 5 – the percentage of predominant cultural identity negotiation strategy groups in NZ and AU



4.8.3 *The levels of intercultural sensitivity of Chinese students*

An independent t-test was undertaken to compare the mean values of intercultural sensitivity between the two samples. The mean difference of the NZ sample ($M = 3.5975$, $SE = 0.039$) and AU sample ($M = 3.5979$, $SE = 0.033$) were very close. There was no significant difference across the two samples and the effect size was very small ($t(244) = -0.01$, $p = 0.994$, $r = 0.001$).

4.9 Summary

The object of this chapter is to test the eight main hypotheses that were proposed based on previous literature and to answer the five research questions that have not been well addressed or settled yet. In order to achieve so, this chapter has undertaken and presented three major analyses. First, Analysis 1 explored the risky and protective correlates of Cultural Identity Conflict. This was done by first using a series of initial regression tests to reveal the effects of every independent variable without interacting with each other, and then conducting a multiple regression test in the later stage including all the significant predictors found in the initial analyses. Analysis 2 was an extension of investigation into the association between five identity negotiation strategies and identity conflict. By assigning participants into different predominant strategy groups based on the highest average scores received on a certain strategy, participant's levels of identity conflict will be compared at the group level. Unlike the regression analysis in Analysis 1 that tested the general relationship between overall ratings on every strategy and identity conflict, an ANOVA undertaken in Analysis 2 was expected to further compare the effect of each negotiation strategy when it was the *predominant* strategy for an individual. Last, Analysis 3 tested the relationships between cultural identity conflict, different negotiation strategies and intercultural sensitivity. This aimed to find out the adaptive consequences of having severe conflicts on one's cultural identity and strongly adopting a certain identity negotiation strategy. Besides the main analyses, a series of comparisons based on samples' residing countries were conducted. The comparisons were concerned with the difference of identity conflict severity, intercultural sensitivity development, and predominant identity negotiation strategies between the NZ sample and the AU sample.

Therefore, this section summarised the results and conclusions of tests based on these three major analyses. The further discussion in details will be shown in the next chapter.

In terms of the results of Analysis 1, in the initial regression stage, variables including personality descriptors relating to "Openness to Experience" and "Emotional Stability" (H1),

“Extroversion”, “Conscientiousness” (RQ1), Ethnic Identity Commitment (H2a), Host Cultural Identity Exploration (RQ2a), Secure Attachment (H3a), Quality of Contacts with Other Chinese (H4a), Quality of Contacts with Host Nationals (H4c), Perceived Discrimination (H5), Perceived Access to Social, Academic activities and Opportunities (H6), Age and Self-reported English skills were found to significantly minimise the degree of cultural identity conflict. In contrast, the following variables were the risky predictors that led to higher levels of identity conflict of participants: Preoccupied Attachment (H3b), Fearful Attachment (RQ3), Assimilation, Separation and Alternation strategy (H7, RQ4). Among these significant influences, the positive effect of alternation strategy’s influence was the only one that was contracted with the hypothesis in terms of direction of the effect. Furthermore, interaction terms between Ethnic Identity and Perceived Discrimination (H2b), Ethnic Identity and Host Cultural Identity (RQ2b), Quantity of Contacts with Other Chinese and Length of Residence in the Host Countries (H4b), Quality and Quantity of Contacts with Host Nationals (H4d) were assessed in terms of their effects on identity conflict. Only the interaction effect between Ethnic Identity Commitment and the overall Host Cultural Identity was found to be significant on identity conflict, indicating having a high-level of ethnic identity commitment combined with a high-level of host cultural identity will lead to the least identity conflict. The summary of the initial results of hypotheses and research questions related to Analysis 1 was presented in Table 18.

The multiple regression model of cultural identity conflict was then assessed by involving all the significant predictors revealed from the initial analyses. The final model accounted for 59.7% of variance in identity conflict. Variables including Preoccupied Attachment, Ethnic Identity (Commitment), Dependable and self-disciplined, Access to Academic-related Activities, Assimilation Strategy, Secure Attachment, Fearful Attachment, and Perceived Discrimination emerged as significant predictors again even when considering their interrelationships with other independent variables.

In Analysis 2, the ANOVA results revealed that individuals who reported the highest scores on assimilation, separation and integration (alternation) reported significantly higher levels of identity conflict, compared with those who scored the highest on integration (general and blending) (RQ5). Moreover, it was found that assimilation strategy as participants’ dominant strategy had a much more destructive effect on experiencing identity conflicts than separation strategy (RQ5). Details of the results were also summarised in Table 18.

In Analysis 3, in line with the expectation, cultural identity conflict was significantly and negatively related to intercultural sensitivity (H8a). Hypothesis 8b concerning the relationship between five negotiation strategies and intercultural sensitivity was partially supported. This is because there appeared no significant relationship between integration (general) and intercultural sensitivity. Moreover, the nature of the relationship between alternation and intercultural sensitivity was contradicted with the hypothesis.

Lastly, the comparisons between the NZ and AU samples found that Chinese students studying in the NZ institution experienced significantly lower level of identity conflict than those studying in the AU institution. However, no difference was found between the means of intercultural sensitivity of two samples. Moreover, blending strategy was the most popular strategy for both samples while assimilation strategy was the least favourite.

Table 18 – Summary of the results of hypotheses testing and research question assessment

Hypothesis	Conclusion
Hypothesis 1: openness to experience and emotional stability significantly lead to lower levels of cultural identity conflict.	Partly supported (No significant relationship between one descriptor of openness to experience and CIC)
Hypothesis 2a: stronger ethnic identity (exploration, commitment and centrality) will significantly protect against identity conflict and negative experiences associated with it.	Partly supported (No significant relationship between exploration and CIC; Centrality was excluded from the analyses due to lack of scale reliability)
Hypothesis 2b: For participants who have experienced high level of discrimination, a strong ethnic identity (exploration and commitment) will lead to greater cultural identity conflict.	Not supported (No significant interaction effect was found)
Hypothesis 3a: Secure attachment will significantly lead to lower levels of cultural identity conflict.	Supported
Hypothesis 3b: Preoccupied attachment will significantly increase the levels of cultural identity conflict.	Supported
Hypothesis 4a: Higher quality of contacts with other Chinese will significantly lead to lower levels of cultural identity conflict.	Supported
Hypothesis 4b: High quantity of contacts with other Chinese will significantly lead to lower levels of cultural identity conflict only for the participants who have resided in the host country for a short period of time.	Not supported (No significant relationship was found between quantity of contacts with other Chinese and CIC for whoever had resided in the host country for a short-, medium- or long-level time)
Hypothesis 4c: Higher quality of contacts with host nationals will significantly lead to lower levels of cultural identity conflict.	Supported
Hypothesis 4d: Frequent contacts with host nationals will significantly increase the risk of cultural identity conflict only when participants reported low-level quality of contacts with host nationals.	Not Supported (No significant interaction effect between quantity and quality of contacts with host nationals on CIC)
Hypothesis 5: Perceived discrimination will significantly lead to higher levels of cultural identity conflict.	Supported

Hypothesis 6: Perceived intergroup permeability will significantly lead to lower levels of cultural identity conflict.	Partly supported (No significant relationship was found between the item Access to Resources and CIC)
Hypothesis 7: higher preference in integration (general) strategy will lead to lower levels of cultural identity conflict while assimilation and separation strategy increase levels of identity conflict.	Partly supported (No significant relationship was found between integration (general) and CIC)
Hypothesis 8a: cultural identity conflict will reduce the level of intercultural sensitivity.	Supported
Hypothesis 8b: Integration (general, alternation, and blending) strategy will predict higher levels of intercultural sensitivity while assimilation and separation will lead to lower levels of intercultural sensitivity.	Partly supported (No significant relationship was found between integration (general) and IS; Contrary to the hypothesis, the relationship between alternation and IS was negative)
Research Question	Conclusion
Research question 1: Is there a significant relationship between extroversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness and cultural identity conflict?	A significant negative relationship was found between extroversion, conscientiousness and CIC. Agreeableness did not exert a significant effect on CIC.
Research question 2a: Is there a significant relationship between host cultural identity (exploration and commitment) and cultural identity conflict?	A significant negative relationship existed between HCI (exploration) and CIC
Research question 2b: Is there an interaction effect between components of ethnic identity and host cultural identity onto cultural identity conflict?	A significant interaction effect between EI (commitment) and overall HCI
Research question 3: Do dismissive and fearful attachment have a significant association with cultural identity conflict?	Fearful attachment predicted higher CIC. (Dismissive attachment was excluded from the analyses due to lack of scale reliability)
Research question 4: how do preferences of blending and alternation strategy influence cultural identity conflict?	Blending had a non-significant but negative relationship with CIC; Alternation predicted greater CIC significantly
Research question 5: Is there a difference between the effect of choosing assimilation, separation, integration (general, blending and alternation) as the predominant negotiation strategy on cultural identity conflict?	Choosing Assimilation, Separation and Alternation as the predominant strategy led to significant higher CIC than choosing Integration (general) and blending; As the predominant strategy, Assimilation had a greater positive effect on CIC than separation.

Chapter 5 Discussion

Based on the results demonstrated in the last chapter, this chapter explains the meaning of the findings and discusses the potential implications of the findings for Chinese international students themselves, institutions or larger societies to improve students' satisfaction with overseas educational experience. In order to draw a clear and effective picture as to Chinese students' cultural identity conflict issues, the chapter first recaps the aim of this research and summaries the findings. Following that, the specific findings are broken into three sections aligning with the structure of three major analyses conducted in the Results chapter. Each of the three sections undertakes a discussion relating to every hypothesised and unsure relationship that have been tested.

5.1 Summary of the Findings

The research in the field of international student adjustment suggests that cultural difference is a salient source of cross-cultural adjustment difficulties. As international students growing up in their heritage culture need to adapt to a different host culture during overseas education, their cultural identities may be challenged owing to the stimuli and demands of the new culture. Despite the growing body of research as to the cross-cultural adjustment of international students, limited understanding has been obtained with regard to a subjective feeling of conflict resulted from mismatching demands of ethnic and host culture. Thus, the very purpose of this study was to provide deeper insights into Chinese students' cultural identity conflict issues.

Due to the complexity of identity development and acculturation process, a major issue evident in the previous studies of cultural identity conflict is the limited scope of correlates used in the predictive model (Stuart & Ward, 2011). This suggests the research in this field to continually incorporate additional variables drawn from relevant theories to investigate their relationships with identity cultural conflict. Therefore, the current study attempted to expand on the existing research by building a more comprehensive predictive model of cultural identity conflict. The model tested the influences of four categories of correlates, that are individual difference (personality traits), identity-related factors, intergroup factors and identity negotiation strategies.

The final model has shown that these predictors significantly accounted for a great amount of variance in identity conflict. Of ten personality dispositions, one disposition relating to conscientiousness emerged as the most important predictor of identity conflict in

the final model. Although emotional stability, openness to experience and extroversion were found to lead to lower identity conflict in the initial regression analyses, the influences were mediated in the final model when other predictors were involved. The findings also highlighted the protective role of commitments toward ethnic culture which was not moderated by discrimination experienced by participants. Exploration of host cultural identity was found to decrease the risk of experiencing identity conflict in the initial analyses; however, when interacted with other predictors, this effect did not appear significant. It was also found that having strong affiliation with both cultures did not necessarily result in identity conflict, as strong ethnic identity commitment combined with a generally high-level ethnic identity minimised identity conflict. Of the various intergroup factors, attachment styles appeared to have a very strong effect on identity conflict as all the three attachment styles entered in both initial and final regression analyses emerged as significant predictors. As hypothesised, increased perceived discrimination exacerbated the likelihood of experiencing cultural identity conflict. Despite the significant relationship found between quality of contacts with co-nationals and host-nationals and identity conflict in the initial regression tests, this relationship did not retain significant when tested with other variables. Consistent with the hypothesis, permeability of academic activities with host students was shown to reduce identity conflict and was not mediated by other variables in the final model.

The effect of cultural identity negotiation strategy on cross-cultural adaptation has been widely examined. However, few studies have examined the relationship between the negotiation strategies especially the variations of integration strategy and identity conflict among sojourners. Hence, this research explored the influences of three identity negotiation strategies drawn on Berry's model (i.e., assimilation, separation and integration) and two sub-types of integration strategy based on biculturalism literature (i.e., alternation and blending). The final model suggested the significant effect of assimilation on increasing levels of identity conflict. Separation was also found to worsen the issues of identity conflict among participants in the initial analyses. On the contrary to the expectation, preference of alternation as a sub-type of integration strategy intensified identity conflict.

Moreover, the relations of cultural identity negotiation strategies to identity conflict were further compared when they were as the most preferred strategy for participants. The data showed a significant difference of identity conflict between groups of individuals who were most prone to the risky strategies (assimilation, separation, alternation) and protective strategies (integration, blending). Moreover, despite assimilation and separation both intensifying identity conflict, the assimilation-prone group had a significant higher levels of

identity conflict than the separation-prone group, which highlighted the strong influence of adopting assimilation on the experience of identity conflict.

Last, the adaptive outcome of identity conflict and cultural identity negotiation strategy was investigated. In line with the hypothesis, identity conflict was an indicator of maladaptation thereby predicting reduced intercultural sensitivity. The preference of assimilation and separation both led to lower levels of intercultural sensitivity. Moreover, blending strategy was found to benefit intercultural sensitivity whereas alternation hindered the development of intercultural sensitivity. The following sections will discuss the findings in details.

5.2 Protectors and Risks for Cultural Identity Conflict

5.2.1 *Effect of Personality Traits*

Conscientiousness acted as the most significant predictor of identity conflict among the Big Five personality domains. Participants being more “dependable and self-disciplined” (the positive descriptor of conscientiousness) reported significantly lower levels of identity conflict (see Section 4.5.1). This is a rather interesting finding as there is lack of past empirical evidence supporting the linkage between conscientiousness and cultural identity conflict. However, the emergency of this relationship can be explained by drawing on previous literature in a broader context of cross-cultural adjustment. Some researchers (e.g., Swagler & Jome, 2005; Ward, Leong & Low, 2004) have found that conscientiousness positively related to psychological aspect of cross-cultural adaptation that involves wellbeing and life satisfaction. Literature suggests that as conscientiousness generally pertains to traits such as self-discipline and deliberation, conscientious individuals may do better in managing their negative emotions (e.g., anxiety, depression and frustration) in unfamiliar and challenging cultural situations (Swagler & Jome, 2005). This helps explain why individuals high on conscientiousness experienced lower identity conflict; conscientious individuals are more likely to suppress or mediate stress and conflicting feelings when they are required to handle inconsistent demands from both cultures. Additionally, this relation can also be explained from the viewpoint of learning process. Conscientious individuals are goal-striving and highly self-motivated. This suggests that they perform better in coping with conflicting requirements from heritage and host cultures, as they may be strongly driven to train themselves to be adept at functioning in both cultures as well coping with the adversity in the transition process.

Despite no significant relationships emerging between other domains and identity conflict in the final model, personality dispositions concerning openness to experience, emotional stability and extroversion were found to have a negative significant association with identity conflict in the initial regression results (see Section 4.5.1). The finding in terms of emotional stability can be easily explained. Individuals who are emotionally unstable or neurotic are characterised as self-conscious, anxious, vulnerable, and prone to stress (Ward, Leong & Low, 2004). These characteristics can lead to psychological adjustment problems as acculturating individuals with high emotional instability tend to be more conscious of the apparent and underlying difference between themselves and host people, get more anxious and frustrated about ineffectiveness of social interactions or feel more stressed about demands in the intercultural contexts. In the similar line, the interpretation of the negative effect of openness on identity conflict is also obvious; people high in openness seek new experiences and are more flexible to switch their behaviours to conform to the environmental stimuli (Swagler & Jome, 2005). This information suggests that open-minded people usually feel positive and curious about host cultures and are less likely to feel trapped within two cultures as they can move freely between cultures. This effect can also be explained by the significant relationship found between an important correlate of openness to experience, tolerance of ambiguity and identity conflict (Leong & Ward, 2008). It was found individuals who were more tolerant about the ambiguity can appreciate unfamiliar views more easily and tolerate the inconsistency associated with new experiences. Moreover, the significant (negative) effect of extroversion answered the research question. One reason behind this, drawn on Ward and Chang's (1997) cultural fit proposition is that extroverted people might better fit in with Australian and New Zealand culture because the communication style in the host culture is relatively direct and frank compared with many Eastern cultures.

In summary, four dimensions of Big Five personality traits exerted noticeable influences on identity conflict to different extent. This suggests an important notion that cultural identity is affected by both internal experience and external (group) environment. This notion implies that it is not practical to merely generalise Chinese students as a homogeneous group when examining their identity conflict issues. Though they grow up within the similar ethnic and national context, the individual difference in terms of personality dispositions is considerable. Therefore, higher education institutions need to first understand different needs of students with different personalities and alter university services to target at segments of different personality constellations.

5.2.2 Role of Cultural Identity Strength

5.2.2.1 Protective Role of Ethnic Identity

This research highlighted the protective role ethnic identity can play in preventing identity conflict in such a manner that the commitment component emerged as a very significant variable in both initial analyses (see Section 4.5.2) and the final model (see Section 4.5.10). Past cross-cultural adaptation literature found that strong ethnic identity protected acculturating individuals against psychological adjustment problems (e.g., Oppedal, Roysamb & Heyerdahl, 2005; Phinney et al., 2001; Ward & Kennedy, 1994). This suggests an effective explanation for the significant negative relationship found between ethnic identity commitment and identity conflict that is characterised as a psychological process in this study; strong attachment to one's ethnic identity would lead to positive affection towards his or her ethnic group and provide a sense of groundedness which helps to alleviate the subjectively conflicting feelings associated with deciding on culture orientation. In addition to the main effect, when examined in conjunction with overall host cultural identity scores, commitment of ethnic identity was also found to negatively affect identity conflict for whoever with weak, average, and strong sense of host cultural identity. This result again stresses the significance of ethnic identity commitment in protecting participants from feeling conflicted among their cultural identities. Accordingly, the managerial implication derived from this finding is that in order to minimise the cultural identity conflict problems experienced by international students, institutions and host societies could facilitate the maintaining of individuals' ethnic identity; specifically, efforts can be put in building an atmosphere where every ethnic culture is treated as valued, and being "patriotic", proud of and committed to one's heritage culture is respected.

Inconsistent with the hypothesis, ethnic identity exploration was unrelated to identity conflict (see Section 4.5.2). This, however, corresponds to Stuart and Ward's (2011) finding that exploration of ethnic identity demonstrated no significant main effect on experience of cultural identity conflict. Despite the absence of main effect, Stuart and Ward (2011) found that there was a significant interaction effect between ethnic exploration and host cultural identity commitment on identity conflict; specifically, exploration of ethnicity increased the risk of experiencing identity conflict among individuals with medium and high level of host cultural identity commitment. The reason behind this finding was speculated by Stuart and Ward (2011) from the viewpoint of developmental theories; the identity development theory (Marcia, 1980; Phinney, 1990, 1992) argued that "exploration" of ethnic identity functions as a prerequisite stage before having made a decision about one's identity option and having

established clear meanings of ethnicity for oneself. It is such a stage that involves the awakening of ethnic values and the contrast between ethnic values and other cultural values through intensely ongoing engagement in activities to seek the information of different cultural ideals; thus, identity crisis and confusion to some extent is inevitable to avoid. However, on the contrary to Sturat and Ward's evidence regarding the interaction effect, the current study found no significant interaction between ethnic identity exploration and components of host cultural identity. This divergence could be explained by the variance between the contexts of two studies; namely, Stuart and Ward (2011)'s study utilised New Zealand-born South-East Asian immigrant youth as samples whereas this study used a sample of China-born Chinese international students. The process of young immigrants' exploration of ethnic identity might be substantially different from that of international students whose ethnic identity is relatively stabilised beforehand in their homeland where continuous challenges regarding ethnic identity are much less than in the host country. In other words, the combat between home and host orientation resulted from pursuit of a clear and achieved ethnic identity in host society may be less intense for international students. Thus, it can be argued that the influence of ethnic exploration and the interaction between ethnic exploration and host cultural identity on identity conflict might be weak for participants in this research.

Moreover, this study proposed the moderation effect of perceived discrimination for participants with high level of ethnic identity. However, the results indicated both the effect of ethnic exploration and commitment on identity conflict was not moderated by perceived discrimination (see Section 4.5.2). Besides the fact of inconsistent findings on the interaction effect between racial discrimination and ethnic identity strength on cross-cultural adaptation (see Greene, Way & Pahl, 2006; Wong, Eccles & Sameroff, 2003 for the positive effect on adaptation and see Yip, Gee & Takeuchi, 2008; Yoo & Lee, 2008 for the negative effect on adaptation), variances in research methods and measurement of related variables may account for the insignificant result of this study. For example, Yoo and Lee's (2008) study that found having a strong sense of ethnic identity was related to lower psychological wellbeing in the face of discrimination used a quasi-experiment measuring participants' situational wellbeing status "at that moment" after instructing them to imagine one or more incidents of discrimination contexts through several vignettes. Compared with the current survey that measured self-reported perceived discrimination and adaptation status (i.e., identity conflict) along with a range of other variables, the interaction effect in Yoo and Lee's (2008) data may be less distracted and not mediated by the consideration of other variables in that the

subjective response after “experiencing” different degrees of racial discrimination was measured and was the focus of their study.

5.2.2.2 Protective Role of Host Cultural Identity

Previous literature in the specific field of cultural identity conflict often found no significant relationship between host cultural identity (referred as “national identity” in studies of immigrants) and experiences of identity conflicts (e.g., Leong & Ward, 2008; Stuart & Ward, 2011). For example, Leong and Ward (2008) found overall identification with host culture measured in different cognitive and behavioural aspects exerted a non-significant influence on identity conflict. In a similar line, Stuart and Ward’s (2011) found the belongingness (commitment) dimension of host cultural identity was not significantly related to identity conflict; however, commitments to host culture was found to relate to reduced identity conflict when interacted with ethnic identity centrality which represents a characteristic of a achieved ethnic identity, and relate to increased identity conflict when interacted with ethnic exploration which stands for an developing identity in the middle of seeking and establishing the meanings of ethnic identity.

Likely due to the different focus of identity components and the dissimilar measurement of the concepts, these findings, however, are not inconsistent with the results from this study. The current research expected that a stable and achieved identification with host culture would protect participants from experiencing identity conflict. In order to test that, this study investigated exploration and commitment components of host cultural identity which were paralleled to components of ethnic identity examined. The results partly corresponds with this expectation; the initial regression test of this study demonstrated there existed a significant relationship between the exploration aspect of host cultural identity and identity conflict, and that overall host cultural identity significantly moderated the protective role of ethnic commitment in influencing identity conflict in a way that higher host cultural identity combined with strong ethnic commitment predicted lower levels of identity conflict (see Section 4.5.3).

The former finding is new to the field as little evidence has been provided in terms of the relationship between host cultural exploration and identity conflict. Moreover, this provides interesting insights into possibly different functions of ethnic and host cultural exploration. As mentioned in the last section, exploration of one’s ethnic identity acts as a seeking and searching stage before an achieved and secure ethnic identity is formed (Marcia, 1980; Phinney, 1990, 1992), thereby very likely triggering identity confusion. With regard to

host culture that Chinese international students are less familiar with, the role of exploration is likely associated with getting familiar with host cultural ideals, understanding and practicing the meanings of those cultural values in the process of cross-cultural transition. In this case, any effort in exploration of host societies may result in utilitarian outcomes that help to mitigate cultural shock.

Furthermore, this study suggests that Chinese students experiencing lower levels of identity conflict are those who have developed and maintained great commitment towards ethnic identity and have formed a overall strong host cultural identity. This conclusion effectively affirms Berry's (2005) notion that interests and involvement into two cultures (i.e., an integrated approach of acculturating) is not always associated with conflicts; instead it can result in positive adaptive outcomes. The results also reveal that under the condition where participants were low on their ethnic commitment, the moderation of host cultural identity on ethnic commitment was much stronger. Individuals with low ethnic commitment combined with low host cultural identity were shown to have considerably higher levels of identity conflict than those combined with medium or high level of host cultural identity. It suggests the significance of having a certain degree of cultural affirmation with either or both heritage and host cultures for acculturating individuals to cope with maladaptation problems.

Surprisingly, this study showed no significant relationship between host cultural commitment and identity conflict, which is conflicted with Stuart and Ward's (2011) study on South Asian immigrant youth. A possible explanation behind that might be that international students are generally not as committed to host societies as immigrants are. If has to be compared, international students' top priority of joining host societies might be more towards educational achievement rather than establishment of attachment to larger societies. This means commitment dimension of host cultural identity may be less pertinent to the acculturation process of international student groups than immigrants, which might be the reason for the inconsistent findings between the current study and Stuart and Ward's (2011) study.

5.2.3 Great Influence of Attachment Styles

Attachment styles proved to play a very important role in explaining identity conflict experiences of Chinese international students as all three attachment styles entered in the multiple regression model emerged as significant predictors (see Section 4.5.10). Specifically, as hypothesised, secure attachment that refers to perceiving oneself worthy of love and others worthy of trust was negatively associated with identity conflict. Moreover, participants having a preoccupied attachment style characterised as seeing oneself unworthy of love but

others worthy of trust were found to report higher levels of identity conflict. In response to the research question relating to the effect of the remaining attachment styles on identity conflict, fearful attachment pertaining to perception of both self and other being untrustworthy appeared to significantly increase the risk of experiencing identity conflict.

The reason behind this great influence of attachment styles on identity conflict can be attributed to the powerful role attachment styles play in shaping the way individuals approach unfamiliar people and behave in new environments without the presence of home or past close people (Cassidy & Shaver, 1999). Whether one has a positive image of self and others considerably affects how individuals express themselves and relate to strangers in the unknown situations contexts. When examined in the specific context of intercultural encounters, the meaning of attachment styles can be interpreted by individuals' orientation towards self and co-nationals who share the similar background and cultural values to self ("ingroup") and orientation towards people from unfamiliar cultures ("outgroup").

In light of that, it is easy to understand why securely attached participants experienced lower levels of identity conflict. Individuals with secure attachment tend to perceive positively of their ethnic group, have a sense of security that they can receive support or help from co-nationals and also have trust and interests in other cultural groups. It suggests that they should have more capacity of embracing cross-cultural interactions with greater confidence, less self-doubt and should be more acceptable of situations where different cultural values are confronted with their ethnic values. This means they are better at handling conflicting demands from home and host cultures and may not see them conflicting in the first place as they view both groups trustworthy and supportive. It can be further speculated that instead of replacing some ethnic values with host cultural values, securely attached people may be able to combine the best parts of two cultures due to their confident sense of ethnic membership and interests in host culture. In contrast, people with preoccupied attachment tend to be doubtful about their ethnic sense of self, but long for acceptance and inclusion from the outgroups (i.e., host-nationals in the context of this study). Previous study on the relationship between attachment styles and acculturation attitudes showed that individuals prone to this attachment were likely to discard their ethnic culture and fully orient to the host culture (Van Oudenhoven & Hofstra, 2006). This means a combat between long-indoctrinated Chinese norms and newly-adopted host cultural values would emerge during the process of identity reconstruction.

Moreover, the present findings suggest a positive relation between fearful attachment and cultural identity conflict, which has not yet revealed in this line of research. At the first

glance this seems hard to justify because having a negative image of both co- and host-nationals means a person does not have any devotion to either of the cultures, which is inconsistent with Baumeister, Shapiro and Tice's (1985) precondition of experiencing identity conflict. However, considering the subjects of this study, Chinese international students who have been brought up in a very strong collectivist culture, this finding may be explainable. According to Markus and Kitayama (1991), the focus of collectivist cultures is on the "harmonious interdependence" (p. 224) of others. This suggests although fearfully-attached individuals prefer avoiding dependence on others including co-national and host-nationals, they are under the pressure of fitting in the collective groups placed by their collectivist norms. Therefore, it is inevitable for them to completely escape from conforming to the environmental demands from both ethnic groups and host societies.

The above findings suggest the significance of developing a secure attachment style within Chinese international students. In order to help achieve so, institutions can activate certain mentoring or peer educator programs in the beginning of enrolment that offers opportunities to develop a close relationship with both co-national students and host-national students, so that a sense of felt security from both cultural groups might be built and enhanced.

5.2.4 Significance of Quality of Contacts with Co-nationals and Host-nationals

This research provides insights into how Chinese students' encounters with co-nationals and host-nationals influence their experience of identity conflict. This study found that it was the high quality rather than frequent times of contacts with both co-nationals and host-nationals that protected Chinese students against experiencing identity conflict. Quantity of contacts with co- and host-nationals was found to have no main effect on identity conflict (see Section 4.5.5).

This finding aligns with past studies in the body of cultural identity conflict research that emphasised the significance of quality contacts. For example, Lin's (2008) study from which the current measure of quality of contacts was drawn from also found a strong association between satisfying interactions with host-nationals and less cultural identity conflict in Chinese young adults. Additionally, it is evident in the field of cross-cultural adaptation that satisfactory contacts with both co- and host-nationals help reduce emotional distress in the process of cross-cultural transition, thus being positively linked to psychological cross-cultural adjustment, while the quantity of contacts with co- and host-nationals did not emerge as significant influences (e.g., Ward & Rana-Deuba, 2000).

Furthermore, the relative importance of quality of interactions with host-nationals was also highlighted through the examination of the interaction effect between quality and quantity of contacts with host-nationals. The results showed that the frequency of interactions did not moderate the protective effect of quality of interactions with host-nationals. This means no matter how frequent Chinese students' contacts with host nationals are, as long as these contacts are positive and satisfactory, Chinese students are benefited from these social interactions to learn to negotiate with cultural conflicts .

Moreover, this study explored the interaction effect between length of residence in the host country and quantity of interactions with co-nationals on identity conflict. This interaction proved to be non-significant so that it rejected the hypothesis that extensive interactions with other Chinese would only reduce the livelihood of experiencing identity conflict for those residing in the host country for a short-period of time. This finding again suggests low importance of frequent contacts with co-nationals in influencing experience of identity conflict.

In this case, Chinese students should focus on building a pleasant, intimate and positive relations with both co-nationals and host-nationals in a stable or even relatively small social network. Blindly and extensively seeking as many encounters as possible with a wide range of people may not lead to a secure and long-term relationship which is the key to provide social support and effective cross-cultural communication that protect Chinese students from feeling trapped in two cultures.

5.2.5 Harm of Perceived Discrimination

The research has highlighted the harmful influence discriminatory experiences had on cultural identity conflict. Participants who reported greater perceived discrimination were likely to experience higher levels of identity conflict than those who reported lower levels of discrimination. This is not surprising because it has been evident from extensive range in cross-cultural adaptation research that perception of discrimination acting as a stressor is linked to negative psychological outcomes such as depression (Finch, Kolody & Vega, 2000), increased anxiety and stress (Berry, 1992), and lower self-efficacy (i.e., an individual's belief in his or her own ability of achieving goals, particularly challenging goals such as adapting to a new culture in David, Okazaki & Saw, 2009). With reference to reciprocity theory discussed in Chapter 2, the effect of discrimination will lead to reduced orientation to host cultures as the exclusion from the host society can be reciprocated by ethnic minority members toward host society. In light of this, it is explainable why a conflicting feeling

concerning to one's already developed commitments to host cultures may well occur in the face of discrimination.

In addition to perceived discrimination's effect on creating conflicts on individuals' host cultural identity, Allport (1954, cited in Fuller-Rowell, Ong & Phinney, 2013) provides valuable insight into how one's ethnic membership being devalued or discriminated against by the host society would result in acculturating people's conflicting feelings concerning heritage identity. According to Allport (1954, cited in Fuller-Rowell, Ong & Phinney, 2013), there are two broad types of reactions to discriminatory experience; one is defined as extropunitive response which lead to stronger ethnic identification and anger towards the majority group while the other, intropunitive response, results in blame and feelings of humiliated towards ethnic group and growing aspiration to be part of the larger society. In view of this information, it can be understandable that either category of responses would undergo a cognitive process of producing certain extent of doubts and denial associated with either cultural identity, and efforts of deciding on which identity to be less identify with in order to minimise the negative feelings of being rejected.

5.2.6 Effect of Perceived Intergroup Permeability

This study indicated that the perceived permeability of participation in academic-related activities with local students was found to exert the greatest effect on participants' identity conflict out of all the items related to perceived permeability. Feeling included and accepted in academic activities with host students significantly reduced Chinese students' levels of cultural identity conflict.

One of reasons for the outstanding importance of inclusiveness in academic-related activities with the domestic students may be attributed to academic or educational achievement as Chinese students' one of main motivations to studying overseas. According to Morrish and Lee's (2011) study on Chinese students who were applying for higher education abroad, their primary purpose of going abroad to study, besides enriching their life experience, is to gain higher quality education from overseas institutions that have a greater worldwide recognition and reputation through which the opportunity of establishing a successful career is higher, compared with studying in China. This suggests whether getting involved in the academic activities with host students greatly influences Chinese students' fitting in with the educational system and overall studying experience in the host country. Furthermore, a survey conducted on international students at the higher education level in New Zealand showed that out of three areas of experiences (i.e., learning, living and service support), learning experience had the most significant effect on Chinese students' overall

satisfaction (Generosa, Molano, Stokes & Schulze, 2013). Therefore, it is imaginable that without interactions with the host students in the learning activities which occur naturally and necessarily, Chinese students may feel even more struggled and confused about identifying their positions within voluntary social contacts with host students, where higher levels of identity conflict may take place.

These findings as to the effects of perceived discrimination and perceived ingroup permeability affirm with the Berry's (2005) cognition that acculturation should be a mutual and reciprocal process involving engagement made by both ethnic minority groups and dominant groups. To help reduce the possibility of experiencing cultural identity conflict which hinders the acculturation process among Chinese international students, institutions, dominant groups and the larger society need to be aware of the powerful role their actions play in restraining international students from achieving positive cross-cultural adaptation. Therefore, certain attitudes and behaviours in terms of taking down the wall between two groups should be promoted.

5.2.7 Risky Cultural Identity Negotiation Strategies

This study aims to provide insights into Chinese international students' varied approaches to negotiate potentially incompatible demands placed by heritage Chinese culture and host cultures. It is believed that such negotiation process influences students' reactions to cultural differences and how they resolve confusion and conflicts as to their identities when they are surrounded by unfamiliar sociocultural groups in a new society. Accordingly, participants' levels of cultural identity conflict were examined relating to their preferences for five identity negotiation strategies (i.e., Assimilation, Separation and Integration (general, alternation and blending)) drawn from acculturation strategy studies (Berry, 1974, 1984 & 1997) and biculturalism research (Birman, 1994; LaFromboise, Coleman & Gerton, 1993, Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997).

In line with the hypothesis, assimilation was found to be a rather risky negotiation strategy for Chinese international students as it significantly increased the risk of experiencing cultural identity conflict in the initial regression analysis (see Section 4.5.8) and emerged as the most important factor out of all negotiation strategies in the final model (see Section 4.5.10). This finding corresponds to previous literature discussing possible hazards associated with adopting assimilation strategy to individuals' cross-cultural adaptation (e.g., Fordham, 1988; LaFromboise, Coleman & Gerton, 1993; Sung, 1985; Ward & Kennedy, 1994). As explained by LaFromboise, Coleman and Gerton (1993), assimilation represents a process of deliberately detaching from country of origin and trying to be socially accepted by

the host culture through learning host cultural ideals and developing a host cultural identity. This identity switching process is possibly associated with intensive comparison and contrast between heritage and host cultural values, thereby likely to result in excessive stress, anxiety, and a sense of “torn apart” between two cultures (LaFromboise, Coleman & Gerton, 1993). Moreover, individuals who choose this path may undergo a gray stage where they are alienated from host nationals and yet to be accepted by the host cultural group (Sung, 1985); thus they might experience great negative emotions such as loneliness, frustration and disappointment. This information give some explanations why participants with higher preference on assimilation strategy tended to experience greater cultural identity conflict.

Separation strategy, as predicted, was also positively associated with cultural identity conflict (see initial regression results in Section 4.5.8). Compared with people prone to assimilation strategy, individuals who choose to retain their heritage culture and refuse distractions from host cultures have a more secure source of social support from country of origin which helps them adapt to new lifestyles and studying standards in the new environment. However, it is almost impossible for this group of people to avoid contacts with majority groups in which circumstances they might struggle to meet up to the host social demands. Thus they may fail to function socially in the larger society, and start questioning and being confused about their self-value and places to be. This means people with higher preference in separation strategy can also experience high levels of cultural identity conflict sometimes especially in interactions with host nationals.

On the contrary to the expectations, general integration strategy that measured participants’ attitudes of integrating heritage and host cultures without mentioning the contexts did not have a significant influence on cultural identity conflict (see Section 4.5.8). This influence might be mediated by other two subtypes of integration strategies that were entered in the analyses along with the general integration, which may have caused interrelation problems to some extent. However, the results provided valuable insights into how two different processes of achieving integration (i.e., blending and alternation) were associated with conflicting experiences as to individuals’ cultural sense of self, which will be further discussed in the next section.

5.2.8 Blending or Alternation?

In response to the call for future research in specific means of achieving integration and their adaptive outcomes (Ward, 2013; Ward, Stuart & Kus, 2011), the present study investigated the association of Blending and Alternation that were found empirically evident

in previous research (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; Ward, 2013) as two dynamics of integration with identity conflict.

Interestingly, the results highlighted the risk of alternating behaviours depending on specific cultural cues as it led to increased levels of cultural identity conflict among Chinese students (see Section 4.5.8). LaFromboise, Coleman and Gerton (1993) argued that alternation strategy was associated with such benefits as less stress from having to decide on one culture and discarding the other, compared with monocultural strategies (i.e., assimilation and separation). However, the present study revealed that this “hard decision - avoided” strategy (i.e., alternation) would lead to dangerous consequences by simply accommodating and internalising two possibly conflicting cultures without making efforts in harmonising them. Benet-Martínez and Haritatos’s (2005) findings can provide additional explanations for the negative and conflicting experiences related to alternation strategy; their survey study found that individuals seeing heritage and host cultures irreconcilable were more sensitive to negative stereotypes associated with their both home and host cultural identities, were inclined to experience greater stress from being misunderstood or mistreated because of either being “too ethnic” or “too mainstream”, compared with those seeing two cultures harmonious. In other words, with an unsettled cultural identity, an alternated individual is likely to suffer from negative judgments and experiences with regards to both cultural identities. They may also experience conflicting and frustrating feelings if conformation to demands placed by certain sociocultural contexts is done against his or her intuitive reactions.

This study found a negative but non-significant relationship between preference of blending strategy and levels of cultural identity conflict (see Section 4.5.8). The non-significant result might be associated with including a broad measure of integration and two subtypes of integration together in the same analyses. Future studies may try deleting the general scale and only involving alternation and blending so as to avoid potential collinearity. After all, the results suggested that inclination to adopt an alternation strategy was more risky and was proved to exacerbate Chinese students’ cultural identity problems while preference of blending strategy did not exert a significant influence on identity conflict.

In light of these findings, assimilation, separation and alternation were found to be the risky identity negotiation strategies that would increase possibility of experiencing identity conflict within Chinese international students. This suggests conflicts between ethnic and host cultures will not be diminished by simply discarding one culture or trying to keep identifications with two cultures separate and untouched. Although this study lacks significant evidence of protective negotiation strategies, gradually internalising certain

elements of two cultures in a compatible way may be a more beneficial pathway to go for Chinese international students.

5.3 The predominant Cultural Identity Negotiation Strategies

5.3.1 *Effect of Choosing a Strategy as the Predominant Strategy on Cultural Identity Conflict*

According to the initial operation of Berry et al.'s (1989) acculturation strategy scales, the strategy that receives the highest score represents a participant's favourite strategy. It is believed in this study that in reality, every individual has a predominant strategy to guide their attitudes and behaviours, and that strategy may have a determining influence on their intercultural actions than other strategies. Therefore, the further study explored participants' predominant strategies by categorising them as assimilation-prone, separation-prone, integration-prone, alternation-prone, blending-prone and examining effects of choosing different strategies as the predominant strategy on identity conflict.

The results first indicated that Chinese students were inclined to different approaches to negotiate cultural demands from two cultures. About one forth of participants preferred blending strategy the most, followed by slightly over one fifth favoured general integration and separation respectively. Alternation and assimilation were the least favourite strategies among participants, yet being the dominant strategy for 14.5% and 7.8% of the sample respectively. This result highlights that when it comes to understand Chinese international students' identity negotiation processes, within-group differences should be carefully taken into account .

Furthermore, the results showed people who were most prone to assimilation, separation and alternation strategies experienced much more identity conflict than those most prone to integration (general) and blending strategies. It proved once again the risk of choosing assimilation, separation and alternation as one's main response to intercultural challenges. Moreover, there was significant difference between the levels of identity conflict of assimilation-prone and separation-prone individuals. This underscored again adopting assimilation strategy had the greatest exacerbating effect on identity conflict experiences.

5.4 Effects of Cultural Identity Conflict and Negotiation on Intercultural Sensitivity

Cultural Identity Conflict as an indicator of cross-cultural maladaptation problem is predicted to exert an negative influence on intercultural sensitivity, the ability of being attentive to cultural differences. As predicted, this relationship is proved (see Section 4.7.1), suggesting individuals who feel caught in two cultures may not appreciate the beauty of

cultural diversity and feel reluctant to modify own behaviours to attend to people from different cultural backgrounds. Thus, it might be very difficult for a conflicted individual to develop positive intercultural relations that in return helps release the tension between his or her commitments to two cultures. This finding is hoped to raise the attention of institutions and host societies to severe consequences of cultural identity issues on cross-cultural adaptation among international students.

This study has gained insights into the identity negotiation strategies that facilitate and hinder development of intercultural abilities. It is predicted that individuals who oriented to two cultures should be better at noticing and responding to differences between host and home cultures than those with a monocultural lifestyle. This hypothesis was mostly supported by the evidence that preference of assimilation and separation strategies was negatively associated with intercultural sensitivity while preferring blending strategy was positively related to intercultural sensitivity (see Section 4.7.2).

Inconsistent with the expectation, alternation strategy significantly reduced the levels of intercultural sensitivity (see Section 4.7.2). Although this finding diverges from LaFromboise, Coleman and Gerton's (1993) theoretical speculation of alternation model's outstanding advantages in helping development of various bicultural abilities, it corresponds to Benet-Martínez et al.'s (2002) empirical findings to some extent. Benet-Martínez et al. (2002) found that alternated individuals might sometimes resist to perform in an appropriate way according to specific cultural cues, as their perception of two cultures being incompatible leads to overprocessing and overcorrection of their intuitive responses, eventually creating resistance to the situationally appropriate behaviours. This means though alternated people are inclined to switch their behaviours according to certain contexts, they may fail to do it correctly sometimes in which case they would be presented to be insensitive to cultural differences.

Therefore, it can be concluded that blending strategy that tries to internalise two cultures in a compatible way should be strongly promoted among international students. Instead of differentiating two cultures and focusing on the discrepant characteristics between two culture, international students may as well pursue the mutual or similar rationale behind different values and behaviours across cultures in a specific context so that different cultural aspects can be weaved together.

Chapter 6 Conclusions

6.1 Managerial Implications

This study provided valuable insights into the important influences of personality traits, strength of ethnic and host cultural identities, intergroup factors, and identity negotiation strategies on cultural identity conflict. The results highlighted the challenge of mitigating Chinese students' identity conflict should be treated as multidimensional and the tackling of such challenge requires involvement of both Chinese students and dominant groups. Thus, not only should education institutions focus on facilitating students' personal buildup against susceptibility to identity conflict, but also they should take actions to build an interculturally included campus. Based on the findings of this study, the following implications are presented, hoping to help higher education institutions in the Oceania region effectively prevent the occurrence or alleviate the currently severe situation of identity conflict among Chinese student populations.

The results underlined the significant effect of individual differences, namely different personality traits on experiences of identity conflict. This aspect suggests that to some extent, institutions should consider designing student services and support based on personalities, rather than merely on nationalities. In this way, students prone to the personalities that can suppress identity conflict (i.e., extroversion, conscientiousness, openness and emotional stability) can bring their positive personalities into full play in the activities matching with their tastes, whereas those having personalities that worsen the susceptibility to identity conflict will feel more secure and comfortable in other activities that can follow their paces. For example, orientation activities organised to target Chinese students or international students in general should be diverse in terms of forms and contents, involving, such as, partying or celebrating events catering for sociable and extroverted students, cultural exchange or host culture exploration for open-minded students, introductory seminars or courses for developing learning or cultural skills for conscientious and goal-striven students, while counseling services or care programmes dedicated for home-sick, and easily stressed students.

This study highlighted the protective role of strong ethnic culture commitment and host culture exploration play against identity conflict among Chinese international students. Drawn on these findings, it is recommended that higher education institutions should develop an environment where Chinese culture or other ethnic minority cultures are valued and respected so that Chinese or other international students can maintain their commitments

towards their ethnic cultures through freely and continually expressing their cultural values and practicing ethnic behaviours. This can be promoted, for example, through an annual campus-wide international festival at which students can showcase their cultures in different means. In a similar line, institutions should also organise activities to help international students explore local lifestyle and culture since efforts in exploring host culture were found to lead to significantly lower levels of identity conflict. However, the aspect that may be easily neglected by institutions is exploring activities should not be restrained at the campus level. Exploration at the community level should also be facilitated; for instance, institutions could consider building links with some local families who are willing to invite international students to their houses to have meals and conversations, and to experience the local family lifestyle. This will assist international students in gaining a better understanding of host cultures in different social contexts.

Moreover, secure attachment was found to greatly protect Chinese students against experiencing identity conflict. Since individuals' attachment styles in adulthood stem from attachment relationship experienced in early childhood (Bowlby, 1973, 1977 & 1980), it is very hard for institutions to exert any determining effect on modification of students' attachment styles. However, universities can help cultivate a secure attachment among Chinese students during their time in the host country by facilitating positive and close relations between them and their co-nationals as well as the dominant groups. For instance, mentor or buddy programmes offered by many universities to first-year students (e.g., University of Canterbury, n.d.) or particularly international students (e.g., University of Adelaide, 2015) are good examples of helping students to build a close and secure relationship with a fellow student who comes from either a same ethnic background or local societies. The mentors help mentees settle in university life not only in the aspects of learning as well as living and socialising, which may exert a great influence on international students' first impression of interpersonal relationships in host countries. However, it should be noted that in either case where a Chinese mentee with a Chinese mentor or where he or she with a domestic mentor, there is possibility that he or she will develop an attachment and trust to people from only either background instead of both, thus other attachment styles increasing identity conflict (i.e., preoccupied) may be promoted. Therefore, it is recommended that if human resource conditions permit, institutions should provide every international student with opportunities of having two mentors, one with same ethnicity or nationality and the other from the dominant group.

Quality instead of quantity of contacts with both Chinese and host nationals were found to significantly reduce the likelihood of identity conflict in this study. To promote Chinese and other international students' quality time with co-nationals and host-nationals, the campus infrastructure that can encourage interactions between them should be provided by institutions. In addition to the facilitation of face-to-face communication between Chinese students and co- and host-national students, universities should also employ social media platforms to promote students' online interactions. As found by Sandel (2014), social media provide a way for international students to build close relations with people who they meet in a new environment and do not know very well. Specifically, Sandel's (2014) results suggested that social media use had such benefits for international students' cross-cultural adaptation as providing assistance in sociocultural skills, gaining useful information, developing relational bonds, and buffering against psychological problems (e.g., stress, homesickness and loneliness). Therefore, institutions can dedicate some official group forums to Chinese students and other international students to interact with either co-nationals or other students within their universities. It will help build a sense of belongingness relating to both groups.

This research also emphasised the need of mutual engagement from both Chinese students and the majority groups in tackling Chinese students' identity issues, in that it was clearly found that higher levels of perceived discrimination and perceived impermeability as to academic activities with host students was related to greater identity conflict. Academic or social activities that enhance collaboration of domestic and international students should be assigned great importance on universities student service agenda. For example, institutions can organise competitions that require the teamwork of students from different cultural backgrounds. An example of such competitions can be those that aim to tackle global issues or challenges, in which case it will be beneficial for a competing team to include participants from different parts of the world who understand different cultures, people and social issues. As a real case, a campus-wide soccer tournament, World Cup, organised by University of Michigan, required the entering teams to include students from multiple nations (Times Higher Education, 2014). This helps reduce discrimination and stereotypes within campuses through cooperation and interactions between domestic and international students.

The approach of assimilating into the larger society and discarding ethnic identity was found to be significantly associated with higher levels of identity conflict among Chinese students. This alerts institutions to carefully avoid excessive marketing of host culture as a distinctive capability of institutions on campus. Though universities should have own cultural

characteristics aligning with host cultures which form part of its brand image in the international market, universities need to be cautious about conducting campus-wide campaigns that emphasise too much on host cultural values and behaviours. Such campaigns may make international students think they have to conform to the larger society so as to be accepted. Additionally, institutions can also encourage lecturers to involve more international cases in the curriculum so that international students will not feel stressed to assimilate to host societies but culturally included in class.

Alternation strategy was surprisingly found to be a very risky identity negotiation strategy that was related to higher levels of identity conflict and lower levels of intercultural sensitivity. In contrast, blending strategy as the other variation of integration was significantly associated with higher levels of intercultural sensitivity. These findings suggest the need of promoting blending strategy that perceive two cultures non-conflicting and not separate within universities. Thus, it is recommended that institutions carry out campaigns or events that highlight mutual characteristics between cultures. An example event can be creating dialogues as to the linkage between expressions from different languages. For example, English-speaking people say “I have been there” to comfort friends in adversity while Italians express their empathy to friends in sorrow by saying “I have experienced this on my own skin” (translated in English), both trying to show their friends that they have had similar experiences and they understand how hard it is to go through it (Gilbert, 2006). This shows although there are differences in how people from different cultures communicate feelings and interact with each other by using different expressions of different languages, behind the differences, there are mutual purposes that they want to achieve. Discussions similar to the example are believed to help students to focus on the similarity and mutuality between different cultures.

Last, as the needs of Chinese students and their identity issues are evolving, institutions should build a regular feedback system that can effectively track this challenge. And it is also suggested that qualitative methods should be combined with quantitative questionnaires so that institutions can get not only the broad information of international student satisfaction but also rich details of their experiences. If possible, universities should conduct data analysis based on country of origin so that deep insights into a specific target market can be obtained.

6.2 Limitations of the Research

The first limitation of the current study is lack of construct validation for the scales used to measure two varied types of integration strategy, alternation and blending. These two

scales were created by the researcher as there is no existing instruments that can be employed. For the ease of comparison between the strategies, the format of the two scales parallels to assimilation, separation and integration (general) scales which is drawn from Berry et al.'s (1989) direct-measure approach. To ensure the content validity, the scales were developed closely based on empirical findings that demonstrated characteristics of people prone to alternation and blending strategies. However, although internal consistency scores for the two instruments met acceptable levels, suggesting good reliability, construct validity of the two measures was not tested in relation to any relevant external measures. This may influence the validation of statistic results of this study. Therefore, convergent validation and discriminant validation of these two variables should be tested relating to theoretically similar and dissimilar variables respectively in future studies. For instance, the blending and alternation strategy can be tested with the Bicultural Identity Integration Scales (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005). The Bicultural Identity Integration Scales involve two constructs, cultural distance and cultural conflict. Individuals high on both construct are defined as low biculturally integrated people, with characteristics of feeling home and host cultures conflicted with each other thereby keeping them separated, which is theoretically similar to the alternation strategy conceptualised in this study. On the other hand, those rating low on cultural distance and conflict are high biculturally integrated individuals who see both cultures compatible and fuse them together, which corresponds to the definition of blended individuals in this research.

Moreover, this study aimed to measure participants' actual approach or strategy to negotiate demands placed by ethnic and host cultures in various aspects of life. This means identity negotiation strategy scales should focus on the behavioural rather than attitudinal dimension of negotiation options, as participants may be more likely to rate high on integration-related or socially desired items when asked to indicate their attitudes, or in other words, ideal options. In that way, the results would be deviated from what was supposed to measure. The necessity of differentiating behavioural and attitudinal dimensions of cultural identity negotiation assessment and choosing an appropriate operationalisation based on the research need has been emphasised by many acculturation scholars (e.g., Navas, Rojas, Garcia & Pumares, 2007; Ward & Kus, 2012). However, this study overlooked that, and a mix of attitudinal and behavioural items was used to assess cultural identity negotiation strategies. To avoid distorted results, this study should have only focused on the assessment of participants' behaviours based on previous experiences under the contexts examined.

The last problem with the cultural identity negotiation strategy measures is it is very long and time-consuming, which is likely to increase the dropping rate in the middle of survey completion. If the current format of the strategy scales needs to be retained, in order to be time-efficient as well as reduce confusion for respondents, future research could only focus on variations of integration by measuring alternation and blending strategies. As there has been excessive studies on other monocultural strategies, concentrating on integration and its varied processes may be more worthwhile.

Additionally, this research only took into consideration four major types of predictors for cultural identity conflict; that are personality traits, identity-related factors, intergroup factors cultural identity negotiation strategies. They can be categorised as either intrapersonal factors (personality, identity-related factors, cultural identity negotiation strategy) or interpersonal factors (intergroup factors). Therefore, this research did not probe into the influence at a larger institutional or societal scale, for example, services and support offered by universities, general perceptions formed or promoted on media about Chinese or Chinese international students in host countries, and host countries' immigration or visa policies. As suggested by Berry (2005), despite the preference of integrating two cultures within acculturating people, their behaviours of achieving so is constrained by attitudes of larger societies. This means only when both ethnic minorities and dominant groups seek intercultural relations and mutual understanding can migrants actually adopt and freely undertake an integration acculturation strategy. Hence, institutional and societal atmosphere should also be examined as possible influences on cultural identity conflict among Chinese students so as to provide additional insights.

6.3 Future Research Avenues

Besides the improvements mentioned in the last section that can be made in future studies to gain additional insights into influences on Chinese international students' cultural identity conflict issues, future research should consider taking a qualitative approach to generate in-depth information with regard to experience of identity conflict. Due to lack of empirical data particularly quantitative data as to cultural identity conflict and negotiation, this study decided to take a survey method in order to gain an overview of this negative experience and its correlates within Chinese international students as well as to advance the quantitative measures. However, because of cultural research's inherently complicated feature, it is difficult to understand how and when exactly Chinese students experience cultural identity conflict, the most important triggers and their own perceptions of why the

conflict would occur and how to mitigate it, through a 30-minute survey full of abstract, context-free and closed questions. Thus, either a mixed method that involves a quantitative survey followed by in-depth interviews with a few participants, or a merely qualitative study using in-depth interviews should gain detailed and deeper insights into this topic.

Additionally, ethnography studies that investigate cultural phenomena through observation from the point view of subjects can be another alternative choice of research methods for future studies. This method has the benefits of gaining real “first-hand” information and avoiding socially desirable responses often received through surveys or interviews. However, there is risk that researchers might misinterpret or over-interpret what they observe. Therefore, this method may be more appropriate for researchers who are from the same or similar ethnic or nationality group as participants. In the case that researchers are participants’ co-nationals, they can also choose to conduct an auto-ethnography study to explore and reflect their own experience of cultural identity conflict in daily life which will provide very rich data on subjects’ subjective feelings and perceptions.

Another avenue for future research is that instead of including a range of factors that might exert a significant impact on cultural identity conflict, future studies can try delving into one or two specific factors to see if more findings can be generated. For example, although quality and quantity of contacts with co-nationals and host nationals did not emerge as significant predictors in the final regression model, it does not mean intercultural contacts have no influence on Chinese students’ identity conflict. The non-significant results may be attributed to the usage of broad measures. Hence, future research can break down the meaning of intercultural encounters, explore relevant constructs such as Chinese students’ friendship patterns (the percentage of close Chinese friends, host-national friends or third-culture friends they have), the discrepancy between actual and ideal quality and quantity of contacts with both co- and host nationals, and perceived reactions by co-national groups if Chinese students have close relations with host-nationals.

6.4 General Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to advance the understanding of cultural identity conflict, its important predictors and its consequence as to intercultural abilities among Chinese students studying in New Zealand and Australia. In spite of the limitations discussed above, the present study has successfully fulfilled most of the objectives.

The research underscores that cultural identity conflict among Chinese international students has been a problem that cannot be neglected by higher education institutions, as on

average, participants are experiencing a medium level of conflict relating their cultural identities. Specifically, the New Zealand sample reported a relatively lower levels of identity conflict than the Australian sample. This study also revealed that individual differences such as personality traits and attachment styles played an important role in influencing how much identity conflict experienced by Chinese students. This alerts institutions to the need of understanding within-group difference among Chinese students and the need to offer various services and help based on different segments of students. Commitment to ethnic identity was confirmed to protect Chinese students from experiencing identity conflict. In addition, the study highlighted the overcome of identity conflict cannot be only achieved through Chinese students' own efforts, but also engagement of the larger society and dominant groups in reducing racial discrimination and opening intergroup boundaries to include Chinese students. Assimilation was rated as the least preferred strategy by Chinese students. Furthermore, it also proved to be the most risky strategy to adopt. Alternation was surprisingly found to exacerbate identity conflict, which implies that simply separating orientations to two cultures may not be a beneficial approach in long term.

Based on these findings, some implications for students themselves, institutions and larger societies were proposed, hoping to help minimise identity problems of Chinese students in New Zealand and Australia through mutual engagement. Future research avenues were also suggested so as to raise the attention to this topic and to further improve the understanding of Chinese students' identity issues to a deeper extent.

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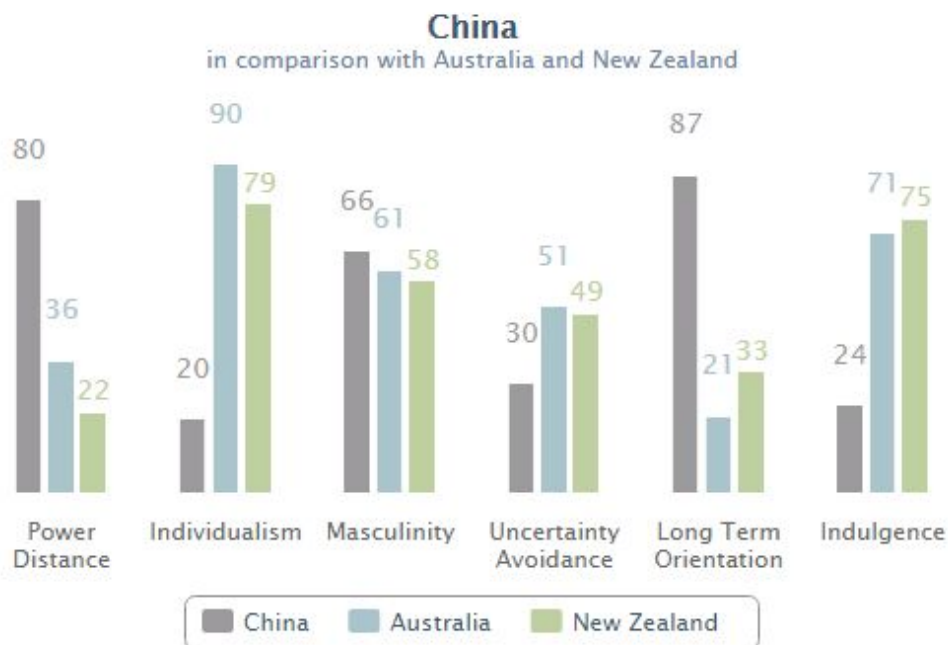
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Appendices

Appendix 1 Comparison of national cultures between China, Australia and New Zealand (Retrieved from: <http://geert-hofstede.com/china.html>)



Power Distance: the degree to which the less powerful members of a society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally.

Individualism: a preference for a loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of only themselves and their immediate families.

Masculinity: a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness and material rewards for success.

Uncertainty Avoidance: the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity.

Long-term Orientation: a preference of taking a more pragmatic approach to deal with the challenges of the present and future; they encourage thrift and efforts in modern education as a way to prepare for the future.

Indulgence: the degree to which the society allows relatively free gratification of basic and natural human drives related to enjoying life and having fun.

(With reference to <http://geert-hofstede.com/national-culture.html>)

Appendix 2 Survey questions

The questionnaire questions showed below are in the Word document version that was prepared for transferring the questions into Qualtrics more easily. The questions are completely consistent with those in the Qualtrics version. Additionally, the questions are in the form prepared for the New Zealand sample. Questions in the Australian version were exactly the same with those in the New Zealand version, except all the “New Zealand” texts were changed to “Australia” or “Australian”.

Information and Consent

My name is Yiting Yu. I'm a Masters Marketing student conducting a study for my thesis which aims to understand Chinese international students' views of their cultural identity in New Zealand. I wish to collect your opinions on how you see your Chinese background, your engagement in the New Zealand society, and how you negotiate possible cultural identity conflict. Your opinions will contribute to a better understanding of Chinese international students' study and living experience. My hope is that this research should contribute to understanding how entities (e.g. the university) can create a more culturally diverse and involving environment.

Your involvement in this project will be to fill in an online questionnaire which will take around **30 minutes**. You will have a chance to enter into a draw to win **either one of 25 \$20 Westfield gift vouchers or one of 2 iPod Touches** in the end by entering your preferred email address.

The project is being carried out as a requirement for a Master degree in Marketing by Yiting Yu under the supervision of Associate Professor Kevin Voges who can be contacted at kevin.voges@canterbury.ac.nz. He will be pleased to discuss any concerns you may have about participation in the project.

The questionnaire is anonymous, and you will not be identified as a participant without your consent. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, I will not have access to your university email address and any personal information. The International Office sent the questionnaire link out on my behalf. You are also not required to provide any identity information in the questionnaire. Your preferred email address given for entering into the draw or receiving findings will not be used for any other purposes. Email addresses will be stored separately from responses so cannot be matched to your responses.

You may withdraw your participation, including withdrawal of any information you have provided, until your questionnaire has been added to the others collected. Because it is anonymous, it cannot be retrieved after that.

By completing the questionnaire it will be understood that you have consented to participate in the project, and that you consent to publication of the results of the project with the understanding that anonymity will be preserved.

Thanks very much for your time!

Researcher: Yiting Yu
Supervisor: Kevin Voges

Demographic information (residency)

1. How long have you been staying in New Zealand? (open-ended)
2. How long do you plan to stay in New Zealand? (open-ended)
3. Are you living ____ in New Zealand?
 - a. With family members
 - b. In an university hall
 - c. In a flat
 - d. In a homestay
4. Have you ever visited other foreign countries for holidays, besides New Zealand? (yes / no)
5. Have you stayed in other foreign countries for more than three months, besides New Zealand? (yes / no)
6. Have you been involved cross-cultural training in any form? E.g. a cross-cultural course, volunteering or social work concerning foreigners. (yes / no)

Cultural Identity Conflict

Instruction: The following items in this part relate to your identity or how you see yourself since you arrived in New Zealand, particularly in relation to your cultural or ethnic background. Please rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement.

5-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neither disagree nor agree, 4-agree, 5- strongly agree)

7. No matter what the circumstances are, I have a clear sense of who I am. (R)
8. I have difficulties fitting into the New Zealand society because of my Chinese cultural background.
9. In general, I do not think that Chinese people know the real me.
10. I sometimes do not know where I belong.
11. I am an outsider in both the Chinese group and the wider New Zealand society.
12. Because of my Chinese cultural background, I sometimes wonder who I really am.
13. I experience conflict over my identity.
14. I find it impossible to be part of both the Chinese group and the New Zealand society.
15. I am uncertain about my values and beliefs.
16. I have serious concerns about my identity.
17. People tend to see me as I see myself. (R)
18. I do not know which culture I belong to.
19. I find it hard to maintain my cultural values in everyday life.
20. I sometimes question my cultural identity.
21. I am confused about the different demands placed on me by family, friends, and other people.
22. Sometimes I do not know myself.
23. I find it easy to maintain my traditional Chinese culture and to be part of the larger New Zealand society. (R)
24. I feel confident moving between cultures.
25. I have difficulties fitting in with other Chinese people.

26. I am sometimes confused about who I really am.

Predictors of cultural identity conflict

Personality traits

Instruction: Here are a number of personality traits that may or may not apply to you. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement. You should rate the extent to which the pair of traits applies to you, even if one characteristic applies more strongly than the other.

5-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neither disagree nor agree, 4-agree, 5- strongly agree)

I see myself as:

- 27. Extroverted, enthusiastic. (外向的, 热情的)
- 28. Critical, quarrelsome. (批判的, 爱争论的)
- 29. Dependable, self-disciplined. (可靠的, 律己的)
- 30. Anxious, easily upset. (焦虑的, 易沮丧的)
- 31. Open to new experiences, complex. (乐于体验新事物的, 复杂的)
- 32. Reserved, quiet. (保守的, 安静的)
- 33. Sympathetic, warm. (有同情心的, 温暖的)
- 34. Disorganised, careless. (杂乱无章的, 粗心大意的)
- 35. Calm, emotionally stable. (镇定的, 情绪稳定的)
- 36. Conventional, uncreative. (传统的, 缺乏创造力的)

Identity-related factors

Ethnic identity

Instruction: In New Zealand, people come from a lot of different cultures. Every person is born into an ethnic group, but people differ on how important their ethnicity is to them, how they feel about it, and how much their behaviour is affected by it. The following questions are about your Chinese ethnicity and how you feel about it or react to it. Please select the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement.

5-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neither disagree nor agree, 4-agree, 5- strongly agree)

Exploration:

- 37. I have spent time trying to find out more about China, such as its history, traditions, and customs.

38. I have often done things that will help me understand my Chinese background better.
39. I have often talked to other people in order to learn more about China.

Commitment:

40. I have a strong sense of belonging to Chinese group.
41. I understand pretty well what my Chinese membership means to me.
42. I feel a strong attachment towards Chinese group.

Centrality:

43. I often think about the fact that I am a Chinese.
44. Overall, being a Chinese has very little to do with how I feel about myself.
45. In general, being a Chinese is an important part of my self-image.
46. The fact that I am a Chinese rarely enters my mind.

Host identity

Instruction: The following statements are about the extent to which you feel a bond with people in New Zealand or the New Zealand society. Please select the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement.

5-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neither disagree nor agree, 4-agree, 5- strongly agree)

Exploration:

47. I have spent time trying to find out more about New Zealand, such as its history, traditions, and customs.
48. I have often done things that will help me understand New Zealand culture, life and people better.
49. I have often talked to other people in order to learn more about New Zealand.

Commitment:

50. I have a strong sense of belonging to New Zealand society.
51. I understand very well what being part of New Zealand society means to me.
52. I feel a strong attachment towards people from New Zealand.

Intergroup factors

Attachment styles

Instruction: Below is a series of statements in terms of the way you relate to close others. Please select the degree to which those statements apply to you.

5-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neither disagree nor agree, 4-agree, 5- strongly agree)

Secure

- 53. I feel at ease in emotional relationships.
- 54. I avoid close ties.
- 55. I trust other people and I like it when other people can rely on me.
- 56. I feel uncomfortable when relationships with other people become close.
- 57. I find it easy to get engaged in close relationships with other people.
- 58. I feel at ease in intimate relationships.
- 59. I think it is important that people can rely on each other.
- 60. I trust that others will be there for me when I need them.

Fearful

- 61. I would like to be open to others, but I feel I can't trust other people.
- 62. I would like to have close relationships with other people, but I find it difficult to fully trust them.
- 63. I'm afraid that my hopes will be deceived when I get too closely related to others.
- 64. I am wary to get engaged in close relationships because I'm afraid to get hurt.

Preoccupied

- 65. I often wonder whether people like me.
- 66. I have the impression that usually I like others better than they like me.
- 67. I am often afraid that other people don't like me.
- 68. I fear to be left alone.
- 69. I don't worry whether people like me or not.
- 70. I find it important to know whether other people like me.
- 71. I usually find other people more interesting than myself.

Dismissive

- 72. I feel comfortable without having close relationships with other people.
- 73. It is important to me to be independent.
- 74. I prefer that others are independent of me, and that I am independent of others.
- 75. I like to be self-sufficient.
- 76. I don't worry about being alone: I don't need other people that strongly.

Host language proficiency

5-point Likert scale (1-poor, 2-fair, 3-good, 4-very good, 5-excellent)

- 77. How would you rate your overall English language skills?

Quality of contact with host and co-nationals

5-point bipolar rating scale (e.g. 1 (Involuntary) 2 3 4 5 (voluntary))

How do you describe the conditions of contact experiences with New Zealanders?

- 78. Involuntary-voluntary
- 79. Superficial-intimate
- 80. Unpleasant-pleasant
- 81. Equal status-unequal status
- 82. Cooperative-competitive
- 83. Accepting-rejecting
- 84. Active-passive

How do you describe the conditions of contact experiences with Chinese in New Zealand?

- 85. Involuntary-voluntary
- 86. Superficial-intimate
- 87. Unpleasant-pleasant
- 88. Equal status-unequal status
- 89. Cooperative-competitive
- 90. Accepting-rejecting
- 91. Active-passive

Quantity of contact with host and co-nationals

5 multiple choices (1-never, 2-once or twice a semester, 3-once or twice a month, 4-once or twice a week, 5-more than twice a week)

How often do you participate in the following activities with New Zealanders?

- 92. Discussing academic issues
- 93. Discussing political or social issues
- 94. Engagement on social networks (e.g. Facebook)
- 95. Playing sports
- 96. Going to social events
- 97. Going shopping
- 98. Celebrating holidays
- 99. Celebrating birthdays
- 100. Traveling
- 101. Working
- 102. Sharing personal problems

How often do you participate in the following activities with other Chinese in New Zealand?

- 103. Discussing academic issues
- 104. Discussing political or social issues
- 105. Engagement on social networks(e.g. Facebook)

- 106. Playing sports
- 107. Going to social events
- 108. Going shopping
- 109. Celebrating holidays
- 110. Celebrating birthdays
- 111. Traveling
- 112. Working
- 113. Sharing personal problems

Perceived permeability of intergroup boundaries

- 114. How easy would it be for you to become involved in social activities with New Zealand students? (e.g. social events, clubs, parties and hanging out)

5-point Likert scale (1-very hard, 2-hard, 3-neither hard nor easy, 4-easy, 5-very easy)

- 115. How easy would it be for you to become involved in academic activities with New Zealand students? (e.g. in-class discussion, study groups and group assignments)

5-point Likert scale (1-very hard, 2-hard, 3-neither hard nor easy, 4-easy, 5-very easy)

- 116. Compared with New Zealand students, how much access do you think Chinese students have to the university resources? (e.g. learning skills resources, help from professors)

New Zealand Students have more very much the same Chinese students have more

- 117. Compared with New Zealand students, how much access do you think Chinese students have to academic or work opportunities? (e.g. scholarship, internship, employment)

New Zealand Students have more very much the same Chinese students have more

Perceived discrimination in daily life

Instruction: according to your experience in New Zealand, please choose the frequency of the following situations you might encounter.

5-point Likert scale (1-never, 2-rarely, 3-sometimes, 4-often, 5-always)

- 118. How often do people dislike you because you are Chinese?
- 119. How often do people treat you unfairly because you are Chinese?
- 120. How often do New Zealanders make you feel inferior?
- 121. How often have you seen or heard friends treated unfairly because they are Chinese?

Cultural identity negotiation strategy

Instruction: For the following activities and situations, to what extent do the statements apply to your actual experiences and behaviour in New Zealand?

5-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neither disagree nor agree, 4-agree, 5- strongly agree); A indicates Assimilation, S indicates Separation, I indicates Integration, I-A indicates Integration-Alternation, I indicates Integration-Blending. Participants are required to rate all five statements under every topic.

Language use and preference

122. *Language preference in interpersonal communication*

- A. I feel comfortable when I speak in English, but I don't feel as comfortable when I speak in Chinese.
- S. I feel comfortable when I speak in Chinese, but I don't feel as comfortable when I speak in English.
- I. I feel as comfortable speaking in Chinese as I do speaking in English.
- I-A I talk quite differently when I am with Chinese compared to the way I talk with New Zealanders.
- I-B I talk very much the same when I am with Chinese compared to the way I talk with New Zealanders.

123. *Language preference in media*

- A. I enjoy books, movies, TV shows and music that are in English more than those in Chinese.
- S. I enjoy books, movies, TV shows and music that are in Chinese more than those in English.
- I. I enjoy books, movies, TV shows and music in either Chinese or in English.
- I-A. I enjoy books, movies, TV shows and music in either Chinese or in English, but I prefer Chinese when I am with Chinese and English when I am with New Zealanders.
- I-B. I enjoy books, movies, TV shows and music in either Chinese or in English, and enjoy either language regardless of who I am with.

Social affiliation

124. *Friendship*

- A. Most of my close friends are New Zealanders.
- S. Most of my close friends are Chinese.
- I. I have almost the same amount of close Chinese friends and close New Zealand friends.
- I-A I act quite differently when I am with my Chinese friends, compared to the way I act with my New Zealand friends.
- I-B I act very much the same when I am with my Chinese friends, compared to the way I act with my New Zealand friends.

125. *Participation in social activities*

- A. I like being involved in social events where most people are New Zealanders but I don't like being involved in social events where most people are Chinese.
- S. I like being involved in social events where most people are Chinese but I don't like being involved in social events where most people are New Zealanders.
- I. I like being involved in social events with both Chinese and New Zealanders.
- I-A. I like being involved in social events with both Chinese and New Zealanders, but I prefer them to be separate events.
- I-B. I like being involved in social events with both Chinese and New Zealanders, and enjoy the mix of cultures.

Daily living habits

126. *Food*

- A. I prefer to eat Western style food rather than Chinese style food.
- S. I prefer to eat Chinese style food rather than Western style food.
- I. I like eating both Chinese style and Western style food.
- I-A. I eat Chinese style food with Chinese people and I eat Western style food with New Zealand people.
- I-B. I enjoy either Chinese style food or Western style food when I am with both New Zealanders and Chinese.

127. *Fashion*

- A. I prefer New Zealand fashion rather than Chinese fashion.
- S. I prefer Chinese fashion rather than New Zealand fashion.
- I. I follow both New Zealand and Chinese fashion trends.
- I-A. I usually wear Chinese style clothes while I hang out with Chinese friends and I wear New Zealand style clothes with New Zealand friends.
- I-B. I mix up New Zealand and Chinese fashion and can wear both New Zealand and Chinese style clothes at a time.

Cultural traditions/customs

128. *Practices of cultural festivals celebration*

- A. I celebrate New Zealand festivals more than I celebrate Chinese festivals.
- S. I celebrate Chinese festivals more than I celebrate New Zealand festivals.
- I. I celebrate both Chinese and New Zealand festivals.
- I-A. I usually celebrate Chinese festivals with Chinese and New Zealand festivals with New Zealanders.
- I-B. I usually celebrate both Chinese and New Zealand festivals with both Chinese and New Zealanders.

129. *Acceptance of cultural values, attitudes, ideas, behaviour*

- A. I am more comfortable with New Zealand attitudes and behaviours than with Chinese attitudes and behaviours.
- S. I am more comfortable with Chinese attitudes and behaviours than with New Zealand attitudes and behaviours.
- I. I am comfortable with both Chinese and New Zealand attitudes and behaviours.
- I-A. I am comfortable with Chinese attitudes and behaviours with Chinese people and with New Zealand attitudes and behaviours with New Zealand people.
- I-B. I am comfortable with both Chinese and New Zealand attitudes and behaviours when with either Chinese or New Zealanders.

Cultural pride

130. *Pride in two cultures*

- A. I feel more proud of New Zealand than of China.
- S. I feel more proud of China than of New Zealand.
- I. I feel proud of both China and New Zealand.
- I-A. I feel proud of both China and New Zealand, and show pride in China when I am with Chinese and in New Zealand when I am with New Zealanders.
- I-B. I feel proud of both China and New Zealand, and show pride in both countries regardless of whom I am with.

Intercultural competence

Intercultural sensitivity

Instruction: Below is a series of statements concerning intercultural interaction. There are no right or wrong answers. Please work quickly and record your first impression by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement.

5-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neither disagree nor agree, 4-agree, 5- strongly agree)

- 131. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.
- 132. I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded. (R)
- 133. I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures.
- 134. I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures. (R)
- 135. I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures.
- 136. I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures.
- 137. I don't like to be with people from different cultures.
- 138. I respect the values of people from different cultures. (R)
- 139. I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures.
- 140. I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures. (R)

141. I tend to wait before forming an impression of people from different cultures
142. I often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures.
143. I am open-minded to people from different cultures. (R)
144. I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures.
145. I often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures.
146. I respect the ways people from different cultures behave. (R)
147. I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures.
148. I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures.
149. I am sensitive to subtle meanings people from different cultures express during our interaction.
150. I think my culture is better than other cultures. (R)
151. I often give positive responses to people from other cultures during our interaction.
152. I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with people from other cultures. (R)
153. I often show people from other cultures my understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues.
154. I have feeling of enjoyment towards differences between people from different cultures and me. (R)

Demographic information (standard)

155. Age: (open-ended)
156. Gender: (female / male)
157. Employment status:
 - a. Part-time
 - b. Not working
158. Which province in China are you from? (open-ended)

Prize draw

159. To enter into the draw for either one of 25 \$20 Westfield gift vouchers or one of 2 iPod Touches, please provide your preferred contact email in the box below. (Note: your email address will only be used for contacting you and arranging delivery of the prize and will be kept confidential) (open-ended)

Summary of results

160. Would you like to receive the summary of results at the conclusion of this project? (yes / no)

Appendix 3 Invite email (Australian version)

Dear Student

You are invited to participate in an online survey exploring Chinese students' views of their cultural identity in Australia. I am also conducting a similar research at Canterbury University in New Zealand. Your feedback will contribute to a better understanding of Chinese international students' study and living experience and will provide feedback to the University on creating a more culturally diverse and involving environment. The survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete and students who complete the online questionnaire before ***Monday 19 January 2015*** will go into the draw to receive an iPod Touch.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary and your responses will remain anonymous. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study. This research project has been approved by both the University of Adelaide and Canterbury University in New Zealand. Further information about the survey is available on the link provided below.

To complete the survey, click on the following address, or copy and paste it into your browser:

http://canterbury.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_bswzqHuTeG0xlX

I would like to thank you in advance for your participation and greatly appreciate your time in contributing to this research.

Kind regards,

Dr Kevin Voges
Associate Professor in Marketing,
Department of Management, Marketing and Entrepreneurship
University of Canterbury

Appendix 4 Reminder email (Australian version)

Dear Student

This is a final reminder inviting you to participate in an online survey exploring Chinese students' views of their cultural identity in Australia. The survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete and students who complete the online questionnaire before ***Monday 19 January 2015*** will go into the draw to receive an iPod Touch. If you have already completed the survey, thank you for your support.

I am also conducting similar research at the University of Canterbury in New Zealand. Your feedback will contribute to a better understanding of Chinese international students' study and living experience and will provide feedback to the University on creating a more culturally diverse and involving environment.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary and your responses will remain anonymous. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study. This research project has been approved by both the University of Adelaide and the University of Canterbury in New Zealand. Further information about the survey is available on the link provided below.

To complete the survey, click on the following address, or copy and paste it into your browser: http://canterbury.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_bswzqHuTeG0xlX

I would like to thank you in advance for your participation and greatly appreciate your time in contributing to this research.

Kind regards,

Dr Kevin Voges

Associate Professor in Marketing,

Department of Management, Marketing and Entrepreneurship

University of Canterbury